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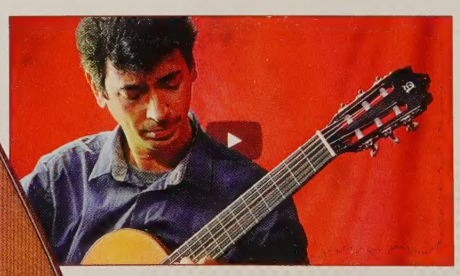

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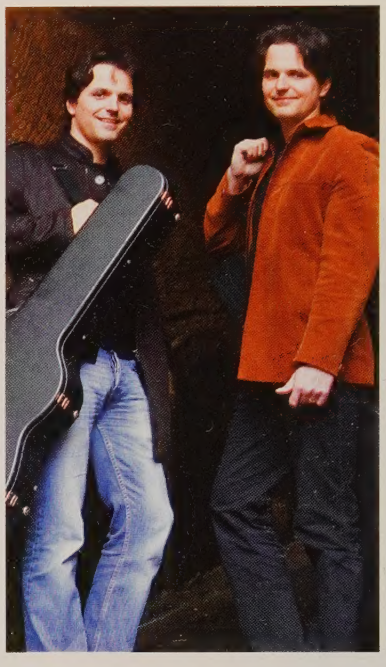

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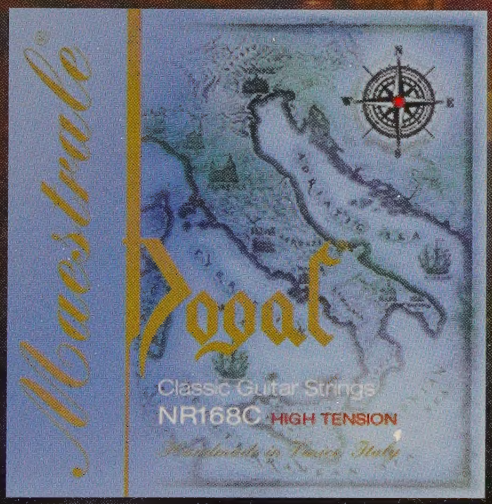

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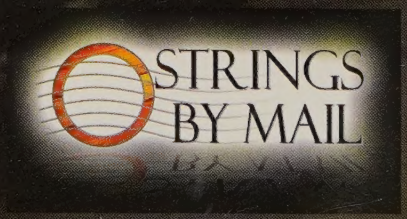

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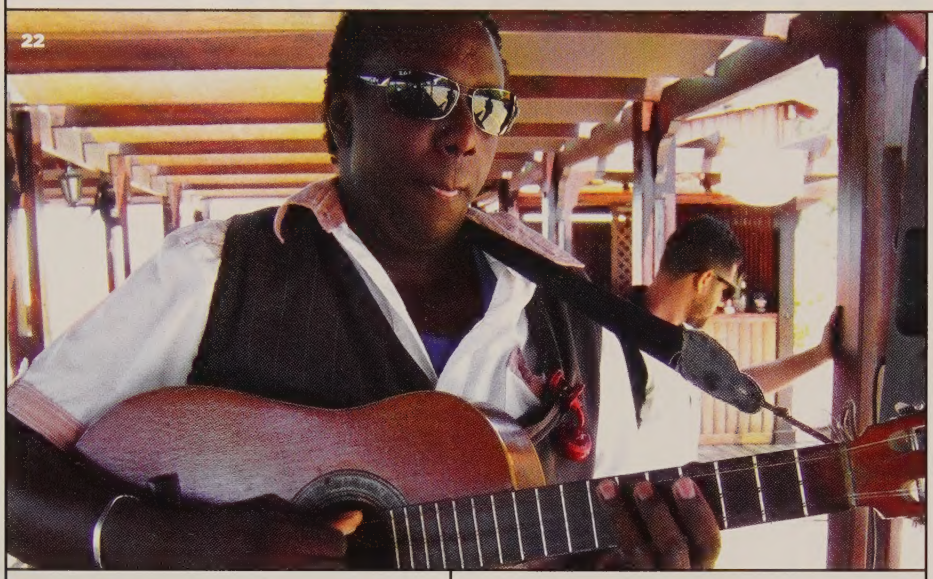

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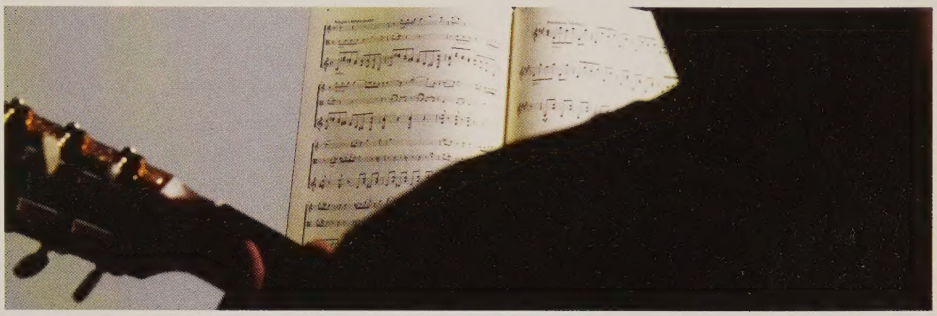

Because we really do listen to your feedback, we're bringing back regular short music pieces to play. With this issue, we are debuting a new feature in the magazine: "Music to Play" (see page 69). And we want you to be involved!

We are opening our metaphorical doors to all of you composers of solo guitar music out there, if you'd care to submit a piece for publication in *CG*.

Here are a few ground rules and some of our thoughts:

1. The piece must be no longer than two pages long. (It could also be two one-page linked miniatures.)
2. You must control/own the copyright of the piece (i.e. if it's available from Les Productions D'Oz or Ut Orpheus or any other publisher, we cannot publish it), and guarantee that it is original. It does not have to be a "current" work of yours to be considered.
3. When you submit a piece, include the full music (in the native Sibelius or Finale format) and also an MP3 recording of the piece being played, whether by you or someone else. No pieces will be considered without the recording. (Video is encouraged, but not required.)
4. We'd also like to know a little about the piece and about you, so please include a paragraph or two about your guitar background, where you live, etc. And if you have any specific suggestions about playing the piece, please include those.
5. Everyone is going to have a different definition of "intermediate" and "advanced." We're looking for pieces that will not frustrate most intermediate players, while still offering a satisfying experience for more skilled players.
6. Be selective. Do NOT deluge us with your entire writing output. Please limit submissions to no more than two pieces (one is preferable).
7. Be patient. At this point we have no idea how many pieces will be submitted and how/when we're going to be able to evaluate them. Running just one piece every three months means that if one of your piece is chosen, it could be a long time until it is printed. Perhaps up the road we will be able to publish more than once piece per issue, but for now assume that is not the case. Also, we're going to try to vary the styles of pieces we publish, so keep that in mind.

We look forward to hearing what you have to offer, and with any luck, you players (and listeners) will be exposed to some wonderful new pieces. Please email all submissions to: editors.cg@stringletter.com putting "Music to Play" in the subject line.

—Blair Jackson
blair@stringletter.com

CLASSICAL GUITAR

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Wulfin Lieske playing 'La Leona' in Verona

STEFAN SOBELL PHOTOS

Erhard Hannen

A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH TORRES' 'LA LEONA'

It was a dream-come-true for **Paul Heumiller** when he found himself in beautiful Verona, Italy, this past spring, playing what he calls "three milestone, historic guitars" made in the mid-1850s by the father of modern classical guitar design, **Antonio de Torres**—including one of the Spanish luthier's best-known instruments, known as "La Leona." Heumiller, a lifelong guitarist and owner of Dream Guitars, a North Carolina-based dealer, was one of just a few dozen guitar aficionados—players and collectors mostly—invited to a special concert featuring La Leona, which, since 1979, has been owned by Dr. Erhard Hannen, who had it restored it to its current glory. The historic instrument has been on loan for the past two decades to German guitarist **Wulfin Lieske**, who played it at the event, organized by Verona-based collector Massimo Raccosta and held at an elegant bed-and-breakfast called Palazzo Camozzini.

"Massimo is a longtime client of mine—we've been doing things together for about 12 years," Heumiller said upon his return from Italy. "He's building a really important collection, which he is planning to put in a museum there. He has two Torres guitars from the same period, and all sorts of other great instruments." Heumiller says he stayed in Verona for a full week, "seeing Massimo's whole collection and playing some of it. One night, eight or nine of us did a 'taste-testing' of the three Torres guitars that were there, which was really fantastic."

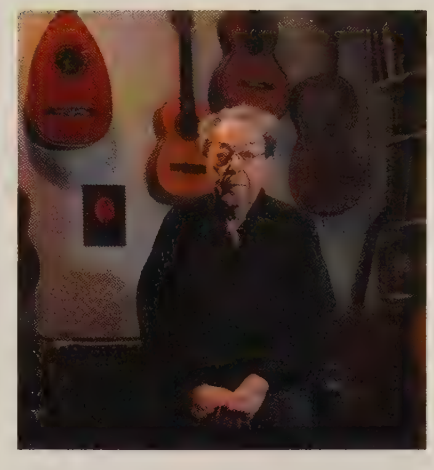
How do they sound today? "Two of them in particular sounded wonderful—La Leona and one of Massimo's, which was owned by Tárrega for a while and belonged to the Hauser family for years. Many believe it influenced Herman's Hauser's design. Those two were nothing short of amazing-sounding and many of us were quite surprised they still had such incredible tone. While we were doing the taste-testing, we also pulled out a 1938 Hauser I that belonged to Segovia, and that also sounded beautiful." He adds, "I got to sit in the front row of the concert and La Leona was just magical-sounding being played by Wulfin Lieske."

In addition to hearing Lieske put La Leona through its paces on selections by Bach (which the guitarist believes ideally suits the intrument), Tárrega, and more modern composers, Dr. Hannen talked about the exhaustive restoration process, which rescued the instrument from unplayability—"It was in total disrepair, with the top sunken in," Heumiller relates. "They ended up suspending it by its own weight from a ceiling, from the face of the guitar—I'm not exactly sure how—then filled the room with menthol eucalyptus vapor to restore the wood and encourage it to come back. And it worked!"

Besides being awed by the quality of the instruments he heard and played, Heumiller was also bowled over by the camaraderie of the collectors he encountered that week. "A lot of us are longtime friends," he says, "even though we might not see each other much. But we'll talk and advise each other. There's definitely a bond that happens between these guys."

Lieske, with La Leona in tow, hopes to tour more in the US soon.

—Blair Jackson



ELI KASSNER RECEIVES HIGH HONOR

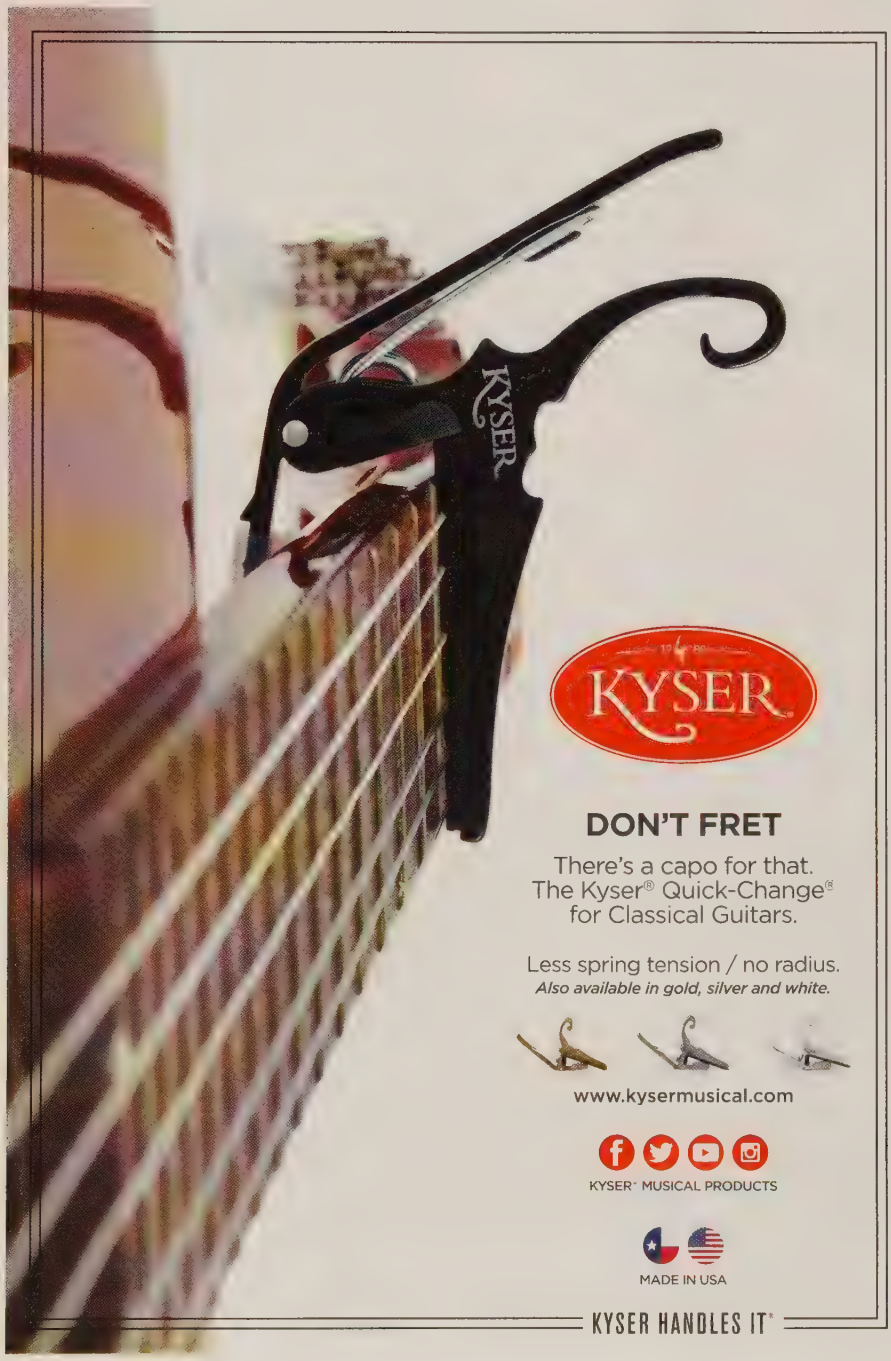
One of Canada's most important and influential classical guitar players and teachers, Eli Kassner (b.1924), has been awarded that country's highest civilian honor, the Order of Canada, which "recognizes outstanding achievement, dedication to community, and service to the nation."

According to a release by the Guitar Society of Toronto, "Eli's contributions to music in Canada have been immense. When he arrived in Canada in 1951, classical guitar had virtually no presence. Without Eli's inspiration and energy, that still might be the case today. Thanks to Eli, the Guitar Society of Toronto [which he founded in 1956] is one of North America's oldest and most active. Classical guitar studies are thriving at the University of Toronto—one of the first universities in North America to treat guitar as a 'serious' classical instrument. Multiple generations of guitar students have been inspired to launch careers as artists, composers and teachers. Eli's International Guitar Festivals and Competitions in the 1970s and '80s have laid the foundation for international guitar festivals worldwide. There is much more, but this gives you some idea of Eli's extraordinary achievements."

Kassner taught at the University of Toronto, the Toronto Royal Conservatory of Music, and started the Eli Kassner Guitar Academy in Toronto. He also played an important role in encouraging Canadian composers to write for the guitar. All in all, it's quite a legacy. His autobiography, *Allegro Vivace con Brio: The Life of Eli Kassner*, was published recently.

SPRING AND EARLY SUMMER GUITAR COMPETITION WINNERS

Spring is when the classical guitar competition season really gets going, so here are some of the recently honored adult or senior winners and runners-up for several of the more notable events, through early July:



Ivor Mairants Guitar Award (London, UK): Michael Butten (1st), Andrey Lebedev (2nd), Mircea Gogoncea (3rd). **Philadelphia Classical Guitar Competition**: Bokyung Byun (1st), Josh Moore (2nd), John Bogan (3rd), Erich Riebe (4th). **Miami International GuitART Festival Composition Competition** (Miami, Fla.): Mallory Strom (1st), Samuel Wells (2nd), Nathan Bredeson (3rd). **'Andres Segovia' International Competition for Young Guitarists** (Monheim am Rhein, Germany): Kevin Loh (1st), Yifei Pei (2nd), Siebe Chaui (3rd).

Fampas International Guitar Competition (Athens, Greece): Boyan Doychev (1st), Chronis Koutsoumpides (2nd), Dimitris Soukaras (3rd). **JoAnn Falletta International Guitar Concerto Competition** (Buffalo, NY): Anton Baranov (1st), Andras Czaki (2nd), Alec Holcomb (3rd). **Boston GuitarFest Performance Competition**: Celil Refik Kaya (1st), Lazhar Cherouana (2nd), Tal Hurwitz (3rd). **Guitar Foundation of America International Concert Artist Competition** (Denver, Colo.): Javier Jara (1st), Andrea De Vitis (2nd), Pavel Kukhta (3rd), Celil Refik Kaya (4th).

MILOŠ RETURNS, LANDS TV GIG

London-based Montenegrin guitarist **Miloš Karadaglic**, who was forced to cancel his much-anticipated winter and spring tours in support of his latest CD, *Blackbird: The Beatles Album*, because of a strained thumb, is on the mend and should be back on the concert stage by the time you read this. Even before his return to performing, his many fans in in the UK were able to enjoy the personable and articulate musician in a different role—as one of three judges on the second season of Sky Arts' popular *Guitar Star* TV competition. Miloš was joined on the panel by American music producer Tony Visconti—best-known for the albums he made with David Bowie and T. Rex—and master jazz/pop guitarist George Benson. All three also acted as mentors for contestants, lending their particular expertise. The program is somewhat unusual in that it features guitarists of all age groups and from many different genres, classical included. Bach vs. Hendrix? It can happen on that show!

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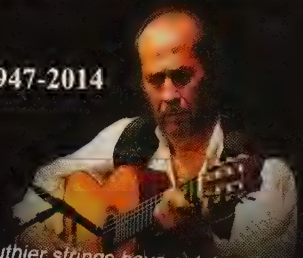

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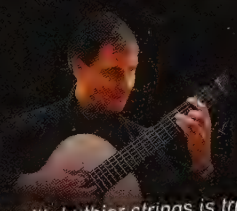

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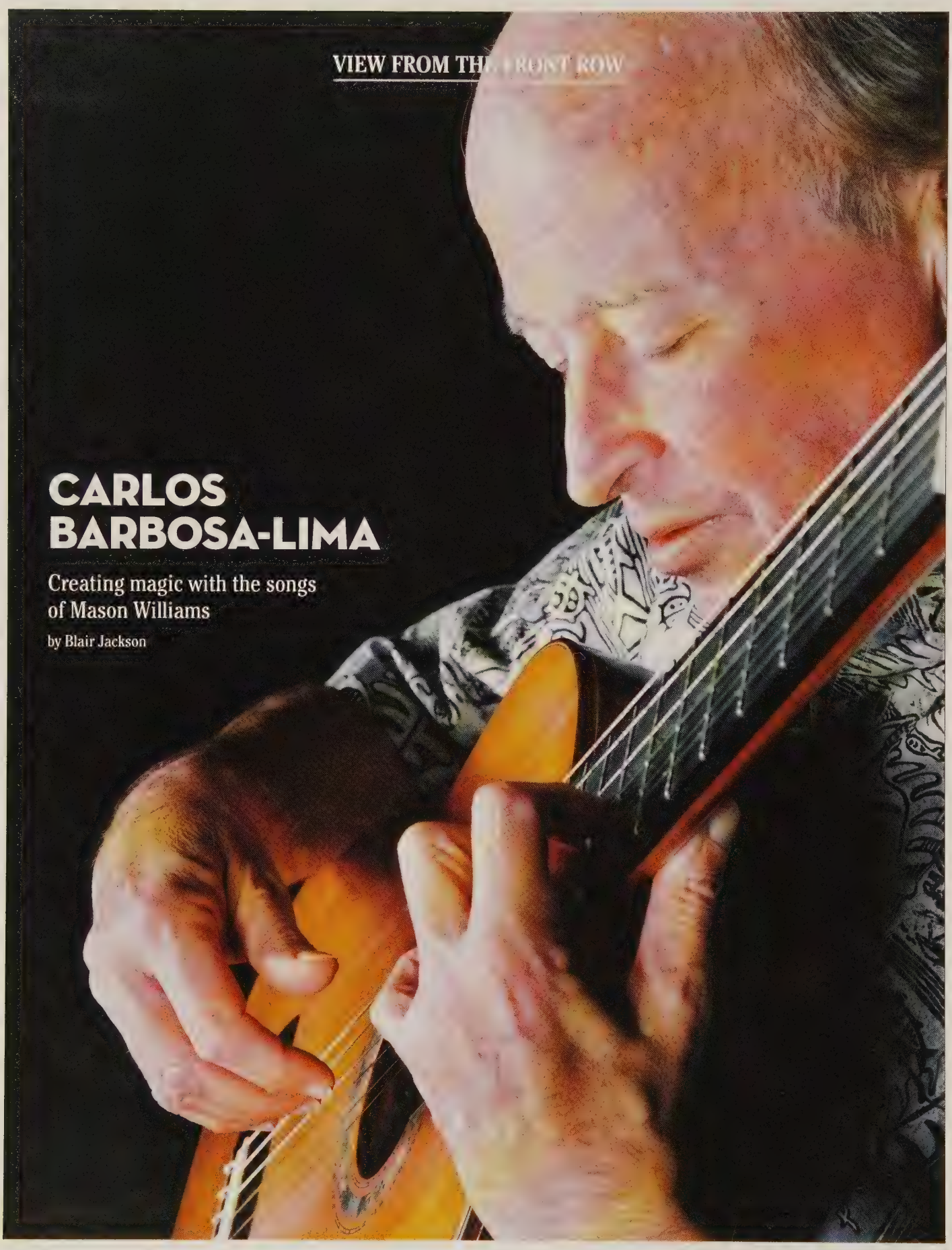


CARLOS BARBOSA-LIMA

Creating magic with the songs of Mason Williams

by Blair Jackson

Next year marks the 60th anniversary of Carlos Barbosa-Lima's solo concert debut at the age of 12 in São Paolo, Brazil, where he was born and raised. To say that his career has been illustrious is an understatement. By the following year he'd recorded an impressive debut album (recently rereleased) and soon after was touring successfully around South America—a true *wunderkind*. A decade later, he conquered the US for the first time, and that became a springboard for work internationally.

More than just an extraordinary player, however, Barbosa-Lima also developed a reputation as a superb arranger, and as his fame spread, composers started writing pieces for him. He moved to New York City in the early 1980s and taught at the Manhattan School of Music for a number of years before moving to Puerto Rico, where he currently lives, in 1996. All along, he has concertized around the world and recorded a stream of more than 50 albums. His massive discography shows his unparalleled versatility as a player and arranger—mellifluously navigating music by classical giants such as Scarlatti, Bach, Debussy, and Albéniz; Brazilians Antonio Carlos Jobim (a close friend who also lived in Manhattan) and Luiz Bonfá; American greats Scott Joplin, George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Dave Brubeck, Bobby Scott, and Leonard Bernstein; and diverse modern masters including Leo Brouwer, Django Reinhardt, Alberto Ginastera, and Lennon & McCartney. Many of his arrangements have been published and he has several DVDs to his credit. His appetite for music is seemingly insatiable.

As always, Barbosa-Lima has been busy since *Classical Guitar* last checked in with him—the cover story of the June 2013 issue mostly dealt with his wonderful Zoho Music label release *Beatlerianas*, featuring Brouwer arrangements of seven Beatles songs for guitar and string quartet, along with eight other Brouwer works for solo guitar, two guitars, string quartet, and guitar-and-string quartet. There have been concerts, of course, both solo and with longtime duo partner Larry Del Casale, and also a brand-new Zoho disc he is quite excited about: *Carlos Barbosa-Lima Plays Mason Williams*, featuring arrangements of more than a dozen pieces by the American composer, whose best-known work is the Grammy-winning 1968 smash hit "Classical Gas."

The *Mason Williams* album was produced by Del Casale, who plays guitar with Barbosa-Lima on half the 14 tracks, and also hired the three other players who help out on a few pieces—Brazilian/New York–based percussionist Duduka de Fonseca, violinist Daisy Joplin, and clarinetist Rick Kriska. Besides "Classical Gas"—which sounds remarkably fresh in this two guitars-plus-percussion arrangement—many different styles are served up, some of which are telegraphed in their titles: "Baroque-A-Nova," "Flamenco Lingo," "Country Idyll," "Fettucini Western," "Guitar Carol." The closing "Shenandoah" is not from Williams' pen, but has been in Williams' repertoire since the late 1950s, when he was a struggling folk singer. The others span many years and genres, from the beautifully mysterious "Sunflower" (propelled by clarinet) to the lyrical and stately guitar duet "In Honor of…," written for the wedding of Williams' daughter Kathy. Melody always reigns supreme in Williams' songs, and both Barbosa-Lima and Del Casale say that was part of the appeal of doing this project.

"Mason is great melodist," Barbosa-Lima says by phone from Chile, where he was performing. "I'd put him on the level of the great American writers of the past, like Jerome Kern, but he's from the late part of the 20th century, of course."

"If you give Carlos a good melody, he can harmonize and arrange it like nobody else," adds Del Casale from New York. "That's why he dug this stuff so much. He did an amazing job with these pieces, giving them a whole new meaning and really making them his own, as he always does. You can hear Mason's American-ness in a lot of these pieces, but you can also feel Carlos' Latin influence in there, too."

The genesis of the project dates back several years. "Until a few years ago, I was not that familiar with a lot of Mason's work," Barbosa-Lima says. "Of course, I heard 'Classical Gas' when it came out in the '60s, and I probably saw [Williams] on the Smothers Brothers' comedy shows at some point [Williams was head writer for the late '60s hit TV series *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour*, where "Classical Gas" premiered]. But it was actually Bobby Scott—who I had a great relationship with—that first really mentioned Mason Williams to me. Later, I met this music critic in Florida, Jim Carlton, and he's the one who exposed me to the wide variety of Mason's music."

Williams is a multi-instrumentalist, perhaps best known for his folk and bluegrass

Carlos Barbosa-Lima and Larry Del Casale

music performed on banjo and acoustic guitars, but Barbosa-Lima says, "Mason is also a very good player in the classical style, and he told me that the classical fingerstyle is his favorite." Between 2010 and 2012, Barbosa-Lima wrote his first few arrangements of Williams' tunes, working on them between tours, "which is usually when I get the inspiration to do something new. My arrangements are usually fairly quick to the concept, but the refining can take a long time. I think by early 2012 I had a half-dozen pieces together, which we sent to Mason. He loved them. When we had six pieces, Mason decided he would produce an EP in Oregon [where Williams lives]. The only pieces I repeated on this [new] recording were 'Country Idyll,' 'Shady Dell,' and 'Classical Gas.'"

Shortly after that EP (*North By South*) was completed, Barbosa-Lima, partly at the urging of his friend Mike Turbeville, suggested to Del Casale that they do a full album of Williams' pieces. According to Del Casale, Williams sent Barbosa-Lima "a giant spiral book about an inch-and-a-half thick, with all of his solo guitar pieces in it, standard notation and tab," and that put more potential songs into play. Del Casale chose the pieces Barbosa-Lima arranged for the duet, with much of the work on those and the ones featuring violin and clarinet (originally it was flute), being done while Barbosa-Lima was visiting Brazil.

Barbosa-Lima says he and Del Casale met almost exactly 20 years ago in Puerto Rico. "I had moved there, and Ernesto Cordero [a New York–born, Puerto Rico-raised composer and classical guitarist] introduced us." In 1997, Del Casale had recorded a CD called *Zenobia: Music of Ernesto Cordero*, featuring solo guitar pieces and what Del Casale calls "art songs" with mezzo-soprano Puli Toro. Over time, Barbosa-Lima and Del Casale became good friends, so perhaps it was only natural that they would eventually play together, beginning in 2003. "After we played at Weill Carnegie Hall," Del Casale recalls, "I said to myself, 'To hell with playing with other people—I'm going to put all my energy into playing with Carlos. Because that was *it* for me—that was the top. We've been playing together ever since."

Del Casale, who was in rock bands before he started playing classical guitar at the age of 15, says he's always preferred playing with other musicians: "Even with my own music, it's mostly been me with other players. It's what I like the most. Now *Carlos* is my ensemble," he laughs.

For his part, Barbosa-Lima says that Del Casale complements his playing beautifully. "Larry has a slightly darker tone. In a duo, if you try to play the same way, it doesn't work, because you need contrast. He's a very good musician. He also helps me choose material and he's my representative in the studio. His mind is divided in so many directions; I can't do that."

"We both play guitars by the same maker [Richard Prenkert]," Del Casale adds. "Carlos has got a double-top and I've got a single-top, and my guitar is a little darker in tone—but my tone itself is warm, where he's a little brighter. It's a great blend. When we play together he almost always gives me the melodies, the Guitar 1 part, because he loves the way I 'sing' the melodies."

Both Del Casale and Barbosa-Lima are in marvelous "voice" on the *Mason Williams* album and are already scouting for the next project. "I always have two or three things brewing—I'll see what makes the most sense," Barbosa-Lima says. One possibility is a live album that captures the duo in all its synchronized glory.

In the meantime, they are eager to get the word out about *Mason Williams*, and Zoho Music continues to reissue some of Barbosa-Lima's long-out-of-print earlier recordings, such as the newly issued *The Chanticler Sessions Volume 1, 1958–1959*, when the guitarist was 13 and 14 years old. Asked how his young self sounds to him today, Barbosa-Lima pauses, then says, "It's like splitting myself in two—me now and me then. It was very interesting to hear the pieces. I can hear very distinctive ideas. I was very fortunate when I was young because I had good mentors—people who used to give me honest opinions and didn't treat me like a child, but instead like a potential artist."

Clearly, their belief in him paid off more than anyone could have imagined. **CG**

ANGELO MANNINO PHOTO

A FLAMENCO GLOSSARY, PT. 1

by Jason Webster

Flamenco has its own vocabulary. Even ordinary Spaniards—if they have no interest in, or knowledge of, the art form—struggle to understand it. So, in the interest of furthering the flamenco understanding of *Classical Guitar* readers, here is the first part of a glossary containing the most common terms for which there are no direct translations into English:

ALZAPÚA A rapid right-hand guitar technique. Generally, there are two variations. In the first, the thumb strikes down on one of the bass strings, resting on the string beneath, which it then also strikes before flicking back upwards on the trebles (although usually avoiding the first string). This creates a playful 1-2-3 rhythm with the emphasis on the 1. The first strike can be doubled to create a 1-2-3-4 rhythm in which the stress would be on the 2 or 3. In the second variation, the thumb merely strikes back upwards on the second bass string, avoiding the trebles altogether.

AYEO This usually comes at the start of the song (*cante*). A ritual, almost sacred moment when the performer sings "¡Ay!" before the main lyrics begin. Often associated with the Jondo (qv) style, it serves many purposes—to fine-tune the singer's voice; to signal that the singing is about to begin; to strike a note of harmony with the other performers; and to create the right atmosphere for the performance.

COMPÁS The rhythm of a particular piece of flamenco music. There are several, but

JOEY LUSTERMAN PHOTO

the most distinctive is one based on 12 beats, with stresses on the 3, 6, 8, 10, and 12, which is heard in *bulerías*, *soleares*, *alegrías*, and other styles. Given the playfulness and love of off-beats in flamenco—and particularly Gypsy music, there are a seeming endless number of variations to this basic pattern. Other common *compases* include the 3/4 (*sevillanas* and *fandangos*) and 4/4 (*tangos*, *rumba*). To be *fuera de compás* (i.e. not in rhythm, not in the groove) is cardinal sin *número uno* for a flamenco performer.

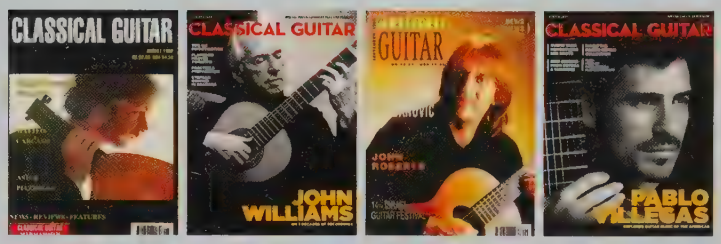
DUENDE The ineffable, indefinable power and magic that can come in a flamenco performance; the moment when the hair stands up on the back of your neck and you feel as if you have had a fleeting experience of something belonging to a realm of experience far removed from ordinary life. Literally, "duende" means goblin or earth spirit, which doesn't quite work in English ("Hey, man, you've got goblin…"), so it's better to use the original Spanish term.

ESCOBILLA Literally "brush" or "broom," this refers to the section of the dance when the emphasis is on footwork, the guitar usually providing a simple, rhythmic backing while the dancer shows off his or her percussive skills in an increasingly rapid and explosive display.

JALEO The various exclamations of appreciation made by members of a flamenco group during a solo section by one of the others—either dancer, singer, or guitarist. The best-known expression is "*Olé*!" (the emphasis is commonly on the first syllable), which comes from the Arabic "*wallahi*" ("By God!"). Other expressions include "*Arza*!" (pronounced "arsa"), and "*Eso es*" ("That's it!").

JONDO From an Andalusian pronunciation of the Spanish word *hondo* —"deep." *Cante jondo* refers to the deepest, darkest, and presumably most difficult styles within flamenco, namely the *soleá* and *seguiriya*. There is a kind of snobbery within the flamenco community where only an appreciation of the jondo is a sign of being a true aficionado, with a certain condescension directed towards fans of the "lighter" forms such as *tangos* and *bulerías*.

That's the first half of the glossary.
We'll continue in the next issue.



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— By Sheldon Urlik —

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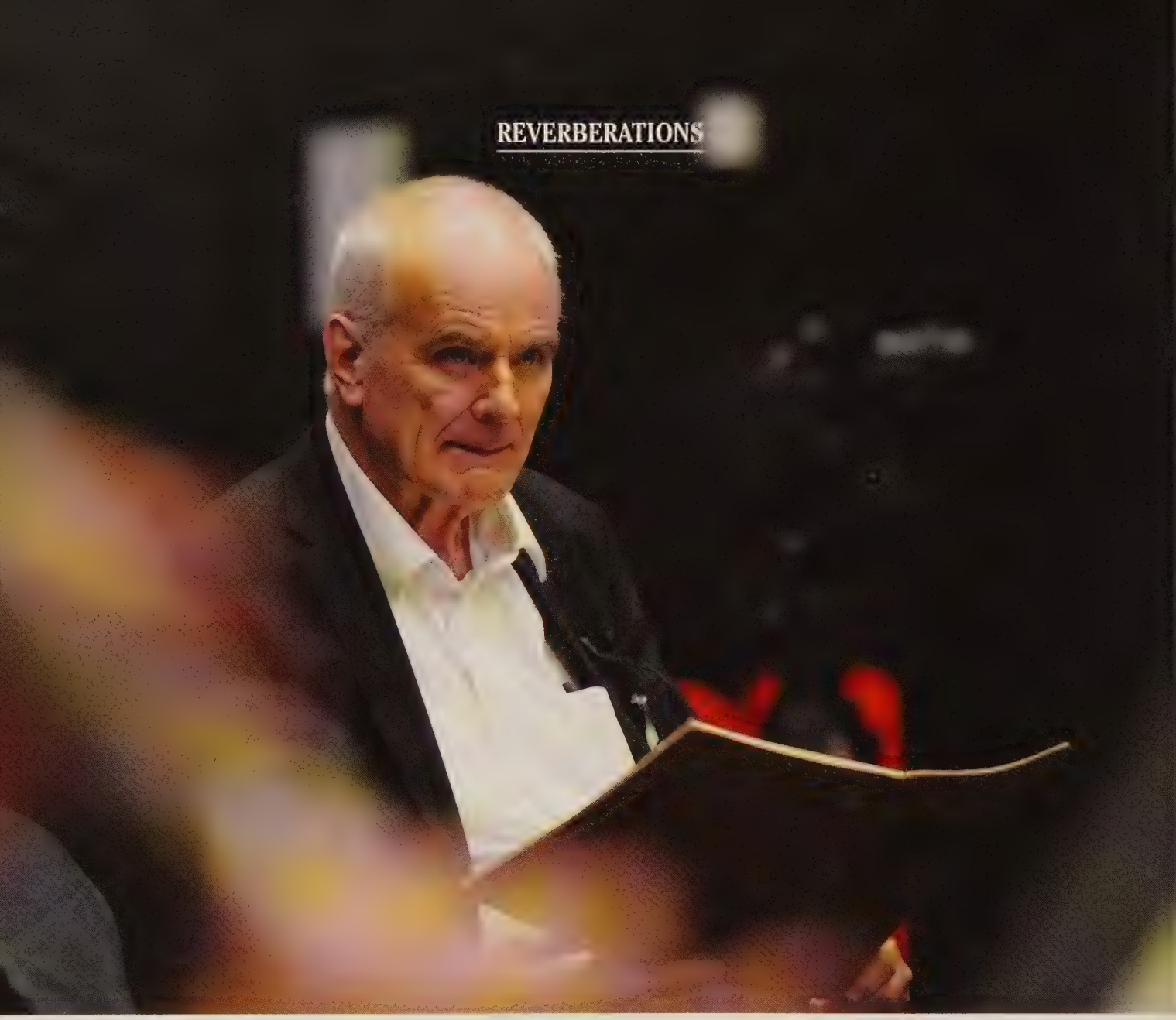


FAREWELL TO MAX

British composer Peter Maxwell Davies' guitar music was singular and compelling

by Giacomo Fiore

Some composers develop a long relationship with the guitar without necessarily playing the instrument themselves. The late Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, who passed away this past March at the age of 81, was one such example—even though many guitarists may only be familiar with his solo repertoire, which was long championed by soloists such as Julian Bream, Timothy Walker, and David Tanenbaum, among others. Somewhat ironically, his most famous work for guitar was composed for piano. The haunting "Farewell to Stromness" originated as one of the piano interludes in *The Yellow Cake Revue*, an environmental protest cabaret work performed by Davies and actress Eleanor Bron in 1980 as an attempt to halt the British government's plans to mine the Orkney Islands for uranium extraction.

Guitarist Timothy Walker attended the premiere, and was so struck by the piece that he arranged it for solo guitar and performed it in recital as a surprise to the composer two days later.

"Farewell to Stromness" highlights two recurring features of the composer's multi-faceted aesthetic: His fondness for writing surprisingly simple pieces, including numerous stage works for children and young performers (many which feature optional guitar parts for the instructor/conductor, or for young guitarists); and his deep connection to his adopted home of Orkney, where he lived from the early 1970s until his death.

Ten miles out from the northeasternmost tip of Scotland, Orkney seems a perplexing destination for a composer—who,

PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD

after all, needs performers and venues for their work to come to light. Davies, however, found a welcoming artistic community in this remote yet fertile and surprisingly temperate archipelago. He developed long and fruitful collaborations with fellow residents, including poet George Mackay Brown, and founded the yearly St. Magnus Festival, an event that continues to bring international artists from a variety of disciplines to the islands.

Among several, the song cycle *Dark Angels* (1974) and the guitar solo *Hill Runes* (1981) represent two striking examples of the collaboration between Davies and Brown, drawing their text, titles, and inspiration from existing works by the poet. Both pieces present the listener with mysterious, hazy harmonies, which effectively conjure the Orcadian landscape and the loneliness of the North. Like an ancient bard's dirge, *Dark Angels* sings of a tragedy that thoroughly devastated a community—the accidental drowning death of two brothers, and the consequent progressive abandonment of an already aging village, now entirely devoid of hope. It's stark stuff, but it's also sublime. Scored for an agile mezzo-soprano, and featuring a short guitar solo in between the two vocal movements, *Dark Angels* is a seldom-heard piece deserving more attention. It was premiered by dedicatees Tim Walker and Mary Thomas in 1974, and can still be found on an out-of-print Nonesuch album (H-71342), performed by Oscar Ghiglia and Jan DeGaetani.

The same kind of still atmosphere permeates *Hill Runes*, perhaps Davies's most successful of his dedicated guitar solos. Written as a set of five continuous movements ruminating on the opening theme, *Hill Runes* displays the composer's interpretation of the guitar as the modern equivalent of the lute, as opposed to an instrument of Iberian connotations. The texture is densely polyphonic, the rhythms mercurial, the harmonies crystalline. The effect is evocative of mist and brine, wind and grass, mysterious carving on the face of ancient standing stones. A beautiful quasi-sarabande (movement IV) gives both listener and player a moment of respite before a furious finale, yet the work ends with a whisper—an unforgettable *bisbigliando* tremor on the low strings accompanies a short rising reprise of the opening theme, transformed one final time. Julian Bream, who premiered the piece in 1981, recorded it in 1984 for his RCA album *Dedication* (also reissued as part of the *Julian Bream Collection*).

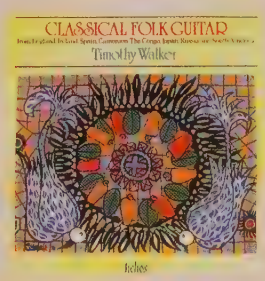
Davies' other two published solos were both commissioned and premiered by Walker, who had been a member of the composer's new music ensemble—The Fires of London—since the early 1970s. Walker had a solo recital scheduled at Elizabeth Hall in London in 1972, and he took the occasion to request a new piece from Max (as Davies was known to his friends). The composer responded with *Ara Coeli,* the title soon changed to *Lullaby for Ilian Rainbow*, in honor of Walker's son, born the same year. Of the piece's four movements, the fourth is the only one that could truly function as a lullaby; nevertheless, the work displays many of Davies' traits in writing for solo instrument, in particular the intricate textures and bebop-like, uneven rhythms. Walker recorded this work alongside a Davies rarity—his arrangement of Lennon & McCartney's "Yesterday"—and several other modern British compositions, for a 1974 album called *Guitar Recital* on the L'Oiseau-Lyre label.

About a decade later, the pair collaborated again on a solo piece, the Guitar Sonata, which premiered at the St. Magnus Festival in 1987. Dedicated to Walker, who helped considerably with the fingering and editing of the piece, the Sonata is the Davies solo piece with the most obvious connections to Early Music—the opening movement's binary form is a nod to the works of Scarlatti, and the closing evokes the rhythms of a Renaissance galliard (though seen through a modernist lens). It appears on David Tanenbaum's *Acoustic Counterpoint* (New Albion) and Per Dybro Sørensen's *Jolivet/Davies* (Paula Records), which also includes the other solo pieces by Davies.

In addition to these solo and chamber pieces, Davies also turned to the guitar numerous times for his ensemble and stage music. Aside from the pieces for young performers (such as *The Spider's Revenge*, *Dinosaur at Large*, and *Jupiter Landing*, all of which feature optional chordal guitar accompaniments), Max used the guitar in several of his operas: *Taverner* (1970); *The Martyrdom of St. Magnus* (1972); *The Lighthouse* (1976), a one-act mystery with supernatural tinges, in which the guitar is seamlessly integrated in the small ensemble, and a banjo used to accompany an unforgettable folk-singing scene; and *Resurrection* (1989), featuring a rock ensemble on stage, and guitar, banjo, and electric bass doubling in the pit. Lute-like guitar parts feature prominently in Davies's wonderful arrangements of Scottish Renaissance dances, as well as in longer works such as *Tenebrae super Gesualdo* and the song cycles *From Stone to Thorn* and *Winterfold.* Many of these pieces were premiered and/or recorded by Tim Walker

Though often challenging for performers and listeners alike, Davies's writing for the guitar is one of the relatively unheralded treasures in the instrument's repertoire. Hopefully we will honor his memory by ensuring that his uniquely voiced and evocative music for the guitar will be heard more often. **CG**

ESSENTIAL LISTENING



"Farewell to Stromness"
Timothy Walker
Classical Folk Guitar
Helios

"Hill Runes"
Julian Bream
Dedication
RCA

"Lullaby for Ilian"
Timothy Walker
Guitar Recital
L'Oiseau-Lyre

LETTER FROM HAVANA

BIG CHANGES ARE COMING TO CUBA

Island nation embracing both Leo Brouwer and the Rolling Stones

by Michele A. Spinnato

I'm sitting in a wicker chair on the back veranda of the lovely old Hotel Nacional in Havana, sipping a mojito, staring out into the deep-blue Gulf of Mexico, while a four-piece combo plays Afro-Cuban music in the background. Below the bluff on which the hotel sits is the Malecón, the city's major boulevard that separates it from the Gulf of Mexico. Traffic is light, as usual, much of it consisting of colorfully restored American cars that date from before 1963, when the US declared an embargo of its products to the communist island country. One might assume—or perhaps hope—that this peaceful pace will last forever. It will not.

When I initially booked my trip six months earlier, I did not realize that this 500-year-old city—as well as the country as a whole—is about to undergo dramatic changes. Cuba is about to be hit by a tidal wave of American visitors for the first time in more than half a century, thanks to President Obama easing restrictions on Americans' travel to Cuba.

In fact, change is already underway. American-flagged cruise ships, such as Carnival's 700-passenger *Adonis*, have begun making tours of the island. Last year, the number of Americans traveling to Cuba jumped by nearly 80 percent, and it will get even more intense: One report suggests that the number of daily US flights into the country will leap from a handful to well over a hundred. It's no surprise that President Obama was accompanied on his trip to Cuba by hoteliers, investment specialists, and other business people eager to have a role in the coming surge of tourism and cultural exchange.

The same week as the Obama visit, the Rolling Stones put on a free concert near Havana's sports stadium that reportedly drew half a million Cubans. Such an event would not have been allowed in previous years, when the government discouraged Cubans from listening to British or American rock music. Now, from both sides of the 90 miles of separation between Cuba and the Florida Keys, decades of bottled-up curiosity is finally getting released.

What does this have to do with classical guitar? Cuba is already known to have a fine national conservatory of music, with a strong classical guitar program. The Cuban educational system is such that even the poorest children who show sufficient talent can receive specialized education in their area of proficiency, whether it's in dance, fine art, or music. Through the decades, Cuba has produced many noteworthy classical guitarists, including Manuel Barrueco, Carlos Molina, Isaac Nicola, Ali Arango, Rene Izquierdo, Albert Valdes Blain and his younger brother Roland, Hector Garcia, Ricardo Iznaola, Jesus Ortega, Mario Abril, and Rey de la Torre, to name several. Of

MICHELE SPINNATO PHOTO

those who lived during the Fidel Castro-led revolution, many exited their country in the early '60s, and now perform and/or teach in a variety of places throughout the world.

One who did not leave, and who perhaps has had more impact on classical guitar music than any other Cuban, is Leo Brouwer. For starters, the 77-year-old Brouwer began with a musical family heritage that few could match: His great uncle, Ernesto Lecuona (1895–1963), wrote one of the most famous Spanish guitar compositions, *La Malaguena*; and his second cousin, Margarita Lecuona (1910–1981), wrote "Babalú," the song made famous by Cuban bandleader Desi Arnaz, of *I Love Lucy* television fame.

Brouwer is recognized because the range of his talent is so broad. His first recognition came as a player, and he performed for many years in concert halls and at guitar festivals around the globe. Soon he was also conducting orchestras in Great Britain, Germany, and Italy. For the past several decades, however, he has concentrated more on composition than performance. His works have included pieces for guitar, percussion, piano, orchestra, and more. In a 1985 interview with *Classical Guitar* editor Colin Cooper, Brouwer noted that he admired English composers because "Your composers know all the instruments so well. Because I play them myself—I studied cello, clarinet, trombone, double-bass, percussion and piano. So when I compose, I can put in the fingering. I don't do crazy things that are impossible to play…"

Many of Brouwer's compositions, especially those for guitar, relate specifically to his beloved Cuba. Listen, for example, to *La Ciudad de las Columnas* ("The City of the Columns") about Havana, or *Cuban Landscape with Rain*, or the beautiful Afro-Cuban lullaby, *Cancion de Cuna*. He also has tastefully adapted popular hits to the classical guitar, including seven Lennon-McCartney Beatles tunes, and he composed the music for the movie *Like Water for Chocolate*.

Brouwer is also a teacher of the first order. In addition to leading master classes in conjunction with his performances throughout the world, he personally taught several noteworthy performers of today. One in particular, Carlos Molina, now living in Miami, recalls the exact date when they met: December 24, 1961. "This happened at a private party where he and I played together with Cuban pianist Zenaida Manfugas. From then on, we shared a great friendship, to the point that he dedicated *Canticum* to me on the occasion of my graduation in 1968."

Molina, in turn, did his part to promote Brouwer's reputation. "At a time not many played nor liked his music in Cuba nor elsewhere," he states, "I did the world premiere of several of his works, including the second series of his *Simple Studies— Tarantos*—and I was the first guitarist to play a full concert of his works, in 1972."

Molina's friendship with Brouwer goes beyond merely that of student and teacher. "My second daughter walked her first steps in one of his houses," he says, "and my youngest one has a rubber duck in her bathroom that he brought her 37 years ago."

Although the two men live close to each other geographically—Havana and Miami—they have not seen each other for some time because of the political situation. "I will never return there until the dictatorship ends completely," says Molina. But they have been able to reunite elsewhere. "I have been able to share with him at festivals in Spain [Cordoba] and Italy [Bisceglie and Fiuggi]." In the Fiuggi festival, the two men, as well as Alirio Diaz, were given lifetime achievement awards. Nonetheless, says Molina, "I still keep his friendship and admiration for his music, as I did the first day I heard him play *Danza Caracteristica*."

The opening up of Cuba will also mean that classical-guitar lovers in the US will finally be able to attend (and perhaps participate in) the biennial Havana International Guitar Competition and Festival, which, since its inception in 1981, has been partially sponsored by native son Bouwer.

I visited Brouwer's office, but as luck would have it, he was unavailable at the time. So I spoke with Yamina Valdes Maqueira, who works on public relations and production for the maestro. She revealed that Brouwer pours much of his own money into the festival to ensure its success. She notes, "When the government sponsors an activity, one can count on a high degree of commitment of funding. But here in Cuba, when one has to do without such government assistance, it can become very difficult." Therefore, to ensure the festival's success, Brouwer puts his money where his heart is.

Also, with more accessibility to Cuba by Americans, including American media, there is a lot more potential publicity about up-and-coming guitarists in the country. And there are a *lot* of young Cubans who are very much into the guitar, whether it's classical, rock, jazz, or the country's unique Afro-Cuban music. Much of the country's music—whatever category non-Cubans may wish to place it in—is heavily flavored with the Afro-Cuban sound that has been

KATHLEEN A. BERGERON PHOTO

embedded in the society for hundreds of years.

Guitar is hugely popular in Cuba, whether it's the steel-string or nylon-string, acoustic, electric, or the Cuban-developed *tres*, a guitar-like instrument, with six strings set up in three pairs, much like a 12-string guitar has six sets of pairs. But unlike a 12-string guitar, the tres is tuned quite differently from a typical Spanish guitar. [*Ed. note: The typical tres tuning is gG cC Ee*] I had read about the tres before my trip, and I looked for a tres each time I heard or saw a Cuban music combo. I heard six or seven groups over several days—three or four at the Nacional hotel, a few on the streets of Old Town Havana—but none had a tres.

Finally, toward the end of the trip, our group took a bus to a tobacco farm in the Valle de Viñales (Valley of the Vines), and on the return trip, we made a rest stop for bathrooms, souvenirs and refreshments. Across the parking lot, I spied a young man with a guitar and thought I'd try once more. It turned out that he was playing a typical 6-string, but sitting on the table next to him in the open-air plaza was—finally!—a tres. I pointed to it and asked, "Yours?" He called over a friend who smiled at me, picked up the instrument, and handed it to me. "No, no," I said, pointing to the guitarist. "You play it." So he did, accompanied by his friend. But the man with the tres was insistent: He put the tres' guitar strap over my head and encouraged me to play. He even showed me some chords on it, and his friend accompanied me as I stumbled through several arpeggios.

Previous spread and above: It's easy to find nylon-string guitars (or, top a six-string tres) being played on the streets in or near Havana.

Prior to my trip to Cuba, I read a suggestion that one should take along a few things that are not easy to find in Cuba, to hand out as gifts to the locals—travel-size hand soaps, shampoos, toothpaste, etc. It also listed "guitar strings," so I took three sets of D'Addario nylon strings. At one point I was on a bus tour with a group, and we stopped to visit a modern dance troupe. After their performance, the young dancers joined us for lunch, with each of us Americans sitting across from one or more of the dancers. Across from me were two young men, each 19 years old, and their enthusiasm for dance—as well as life itself—was clear. Knowing I was going to be writing an article for *Classical Guitar*, I asked the young man across from me if he knew of Leo Brouwer. "Oh yes," he responded reverently, "the Maestro. He's the best!" I asked him if he played guitar, and his friend next to him answered for him, "Oh, he loves to play his guitar. He's always playing it."

Further questioning revealed that he had taken only a semester of formal guitar lessons in school before switching to the modern dance curriculum, but has continued playing guitar, too. He said he loved all kinds of music—classical, jazz, and he loved rock. Did he get to see the Rolling Stones perform when they were in Havana a few days earlier? "Oh yes!" he said. "If I live to be 100, and I forget all about modern dance, if I am married and I forget my wife, I will always remember seeing the Rolling Stones!" With such enthusiasm already on display, imagine my anticipation as I reached into my bag to pull out a new set of strings for him.

His reaction was the high point of the trip. **CG**

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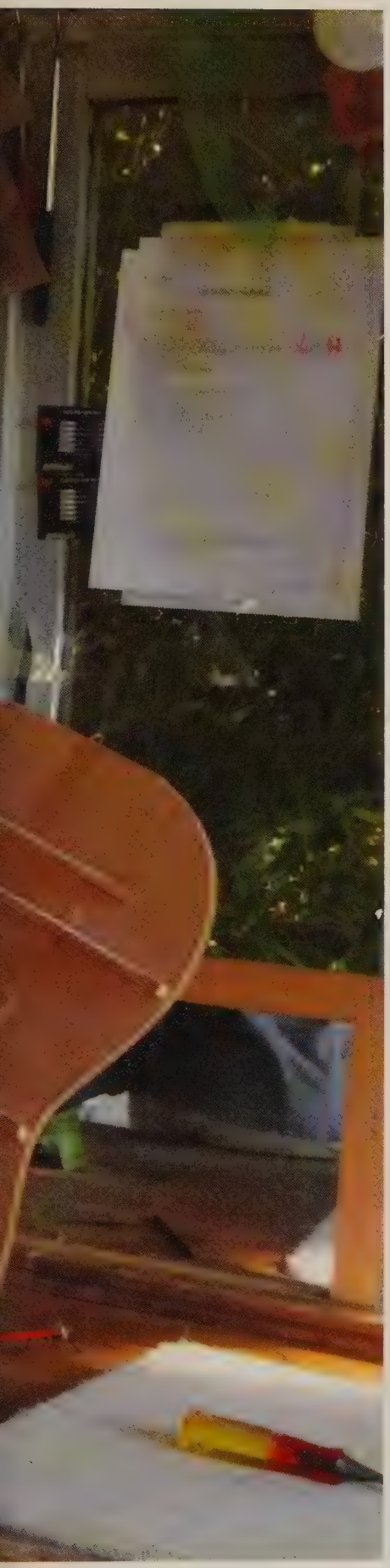


JAMES LISTER

UK luthier blends old and new approaches

by Guy Traviss

James Lister's interest in the classical guitar was first as a player, but the pleasure and challenge of working with wood lured him away from a career in physics and engineering to study instrument-making full time. He studied lutherie at London Guildhall University and then specialized in classical guitar at Newark College with Roy Courtnall and Tony Johnson. James currently teaches at Newark College two days a week, "and the rest of my working week is spent building guitars in my workshop in Sheffield." He makes both fine classical and flamenco guitars "handmade in the Spanish tradition," influenced by acknowledged masters such as Antonio de Torres, Hermann Hauser, and Santos Hernandez, but with his own personal touches and innovations.

CLASSICAL GUITAR: How did you get into making guitars?

JAMES LISTER: I didn't start making guitars until I was in my late 30s. I had been working with high-power laser systems for about 13 years, but I wanted to do something more creative, and to be my own boss. I had always loved working with wood, and had played classical guitar on and off for over 20 years, so I quit my job, moved to London, and started my [lutherie] studies.

CG: How does it feel to have reached you 100th instrument?

LISTER: I started thinking about my 100th guitar in 2014. I wanted to do something a bit different, but I've never really been interested in elaborately decorated instruments. I enjoy working with alternative tonewoods, and after a lot of thought, I decided to build a guitar using no tropical hardwoods, and to use FSC certified woods wherever possible.

I designed a new rosette to distinguish my "non-tropical" guitars from my standard instruments. I came up with a leaf design that fit the concept well, and it was also quite a challenge to make—the finished rosette contains over 25,000 pieces of wood, most of which are about a tenth of a square millimeter in area.

It was quite a milestone for me to reach my 100th guitar, and I have been extremely pleased with the responses I've had to it. Most significantly, I showed the guitar to Marcin Dylla at the Classical Guitar Retreat in Scotland last year. He was very impressed with the guitar, and really liked the tone coloration produced by the maple back and sides. In January I traveled to Poland to deliver the guitar to Marcin, who now has it on loan for a year.

I have recently received an order for a close copy of this guitar, the main difference being that it will have a shorter scale length—640mm—and I'm hopeful that more players will become open to the idea that great classical guitars do not have to have Brazilian rosewood back and sides!

CG: Looking back, what are some things have you learned about guitar-building?

LISTER: It amazes me that after 15 years building guitars, I'm still learning all the time. Over the past few years, I've made a few guitars that are very different from my standard instruments. I think there are two contradictory aspects to developing your skills as a guitar maker. It is important in the early part of your career to find a design that works well for you as a maker, and then stick quite closely to that design, just making small changes in areas that you think can be improved, and trying to perfect that particular design.

On the other hand, it can be very useful to experiment with significantly different designs, and in recent years I have built

Marcin Dylla plays Lister's 100th guitar, made with FSC-certified wood.

a guitar with radial bracing; one based on Romanillos' guitars, which turned out very similar to my own design; a very experimental guitar with a really thin top, heavy back and sides, but with traditional fan bracing; and most recently, a copy of a 1838 Panormo. With the exception of the Romanillos, these guitars all sounded quite different than my standard design, and helped to improve my understanding of the relative significance of some of the many variables I can adjust to control the sound of my guitars.

CG: How far have your ideas come?

LISTER: Although experimenting with other designs is a very useful learning exercise, I still always come back to variations on the theme of Torres, with solid woods and fan bracing. It's the sound that I grew up with, and when I hear one of my guitars in the hands of a really good player, I know that there really isn't much of a gap between the guitars I make now, and my "ideal" guitar.

CG: What is likely to change in future?

LISTER: There will continue to be new ideas and new developments in classical-guitar making, but I think there is something of a move away from the modern construction ideas, such as double-tops and lattice bracing, and back to Torres-style instruments.

The other change I see happening is an increasing interest in building guitars using alternative, non-tropical hardwoods. Tropical hardwoods are becoming rarer and more expensive, and more customers are becoming aware of the environmental impact of using them. Newark College is one of three European lutherie schools involved in the Leonardo Guitar Research Project, an organization funded by the European Commission to research the possibilities of building acoustic and classical guitars from non-tropical woods. Students and luthiers involved in the project are building and comparing guitars made with and without tropical hardwoods. As an ex-scientist, I would have to say that the project is not likely to come up with any definitive answers to such difficult questions as "Is a maple guitar as good as a rosewood guitar?" But I hope that it will at least increase awareness among both luthiers and players.

It isn't difficult to find good substitutes for the main tonewoods—spruce for the top is no problem, and I have always been a fan of maple guitars. And for my 100th guitar I managed to source these from an FSC certified supplier. The neck wood is a little more difficult, but walnut works well and there are a few other options. Fingerboards on good-quality classical guitars have traditionally been made from ebony, and players have an expectation that fingerboards on quality classical guitars will be black. It is difficult to find a good alternative to meet that expectation, but bog oak is one option I'm happy with. There is an issue with sustainability there, so I'm also looking at some synthetic alternatives for fingerboards.

CG: How does contact with guitarists inform your day to day work?

LISTER: Frequent contact with a variety of classical guitarists is very important to me as a maker, although I try not to let any individual player's feedback influence the direction I take in developing my guitars, as I have a clear idea in my own mind about the sound I'm aiming for. Of course, it's great when players of Marcin's abilities are enthusiastic about the work you are doing, and it gives me confidence that I'm moving in the right direction.

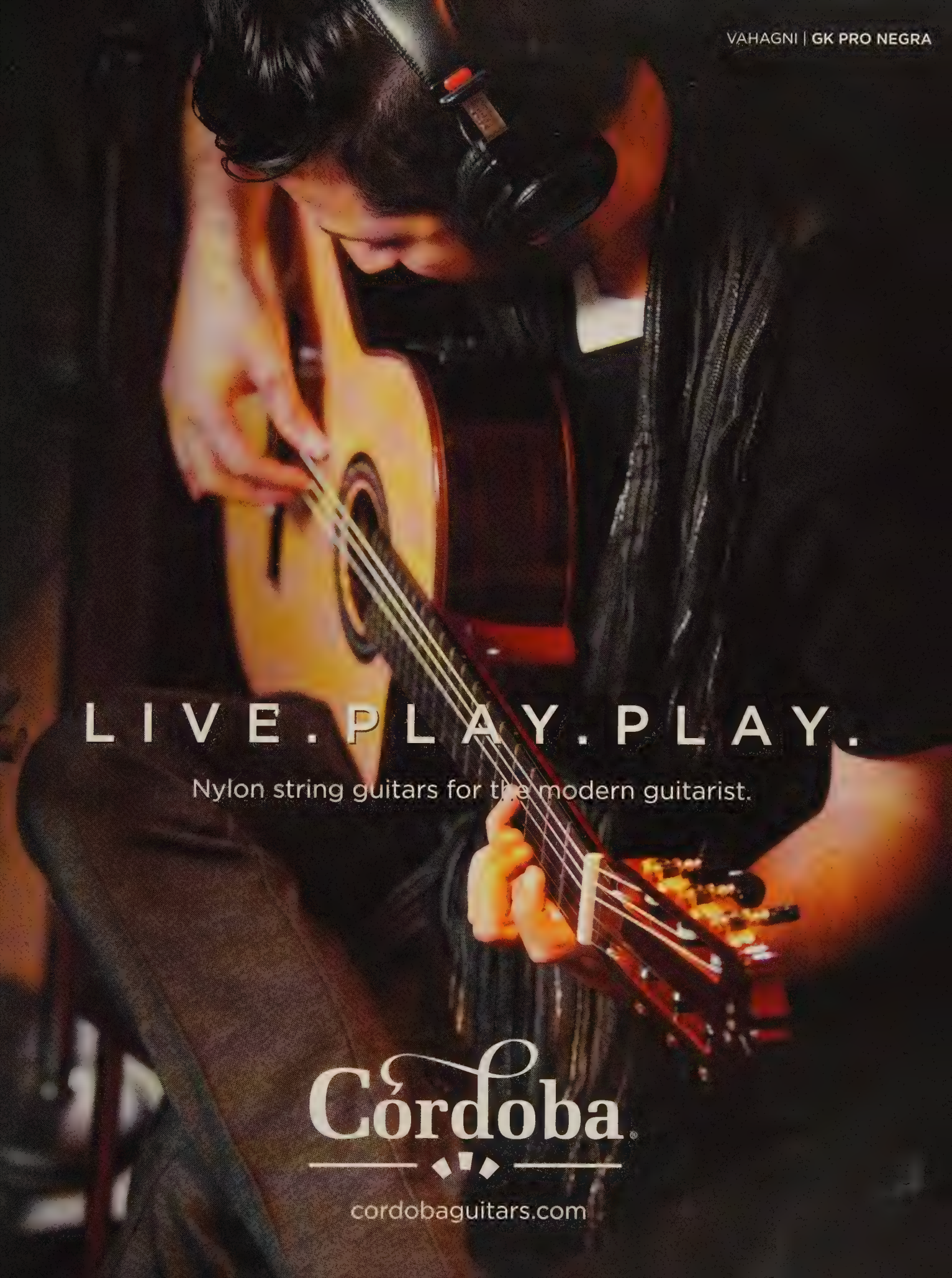
CG: You've been quite open about sharing your knowledge with other builders—for instance, you have a DVD about French polishing available on your website and you have also offered detailed plans of some of your designs. How did each of those come about?

LISTER: About five years ago, my commissioned work was a bit slow, so I started looking into the possibility of putting together a series of DVDs focusing on the traditional Spanish method of classical-guitar building. I was fortunate to have a friend who was in the filmmaking business, and we decided to start with a smaller project to see how it went. The most obvious, and perhaps most useful standalone topic I thought we could easily cover in a single DVD was French polishing. It was quite a learning experience for me; I simply hadn't been aware just how much time and work was involved in putting something like that together. I was very pleased with the results, however, and I've sold nearly 200 copies of the DVD to date. Sadly, the idea of making a series of DVDs covering the whole guitar making process has had to be put to one side, as I just don't have the time to do it now.

As for the plans, a few years ago I decided that our students at Newark College should have access to better quality, more detailed plans of the Torres guitar that they build in their first year. I produced the plans on AutoCAD, and having spent quite a lot of time and effort coming to grips with the software, I thought I might as well produce some good-quality plans for my own guitars. I'd had a few inquiries about the construction of my guitars from amateur luthiers, so I decided to make the plans available for sale.

CG: Where do you sell your guitars?

LISTER: Most of my guitars are commissions, and are sold direct to the customer, but I'm hoping that my guitars will become available through Miles Roberts at Kent Guitar Classics later this year. In general I prefer to have that one-to-one contact with the customer and work towards making a guitar that exactly fits their needs. **CG**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LAURA SNOWDEN

RISING BRITISH GUITARIST DEFTLY LINKS THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

BY THÉRÈSE WASSILY SABA

JULES LAWRENCE PHOTO

In this 100th anniversary celebration year of the birth of virtuoso violinist Yehudi Menuhin (1916–1999), it seems fitting to also celebrate the blossoming career of Laura Snowden, the first guitar graduate of the Yehudi Menuhin School—a specialist school for young musicians (ages 8–18) in London. Since graduating in 2008, Snowden has completed her Masters at the Royal College of Music in London as both a guitarist and a composer, and has quickly established a successful performing career, earning young artist awards such as the Tillett Trust, St. John's Smith Square, International Guitar Foundation, and most notably, the Julian Bream Trust.

Bream, the celebrated British guitarist, now in his 80s and no longer performing, continues to commission mainstream composers to write for the classical guitar—an aspect of his outstanding career for which future generations of guitarists are indebted to him. His collaborations with composers such as Benjamin Britten, Lennox Berkeley, and William Walton resulted in profound works for the solo guitar. Snowden has been working not only on the new repertoire that Bream is commissioning, but also on the repertoire that he made famous in his own performing career. This passing on of knowledge is linking this young musician securely with the past and future Bream repertoire.

It was during her master's studies at Royal College of Music (attending on a Julian Bream scholarship) that Snowden began traveling to Bream's house to work with him on repertoire, as he had chosen her to give the next Julian Bream Trust Concert on November 21, 2015, at Wigmore Hall—a tremendous honor at a very high-profile event.

For this concert (reviewed in the Spring 2016 issue of *Classical Guitar*) Bream commissioned the British composer Julian Anderson to write a piece for solo guitar—*Catalan Peasant with Guitar*—and Snowden was chosen to play it. Creating the work turned into quite a three-way collaboration.

"Julian Anderson and I met regularly throughout the process, which is how he prefers to work," Snowden says. "He might bring a particular series of notes, which he'd ask me to play in different ways or even improvise around. I was really struck by his acute ear for timbre, and his ability to produce truly inventive and authentic ideas while considering the practicalities of the guitar. He even bought himself a guitar. Once, he came up with an intricate counterpoint passage and fingered the whole thing unaided!

"I also visited Julian Bream as the piece progressed," she continues, "and upon its completion, Anderson and I paid Bream a visit. Bream made some suggestions relating to the resonance of the guitar—for example, doubling an open string note on a closed string or adding a harmonic here and there. Throughout the process, I would demonstrate a number of fingering options for Anderson, who often had a strong sense of which fingering he preferred, because of the particular color it created. About a month before the premiere, I was asked by Schott [publishers] to send over my fingerings for publication, and these fingerings took into account Anderson's preferences as well as Bream's ideas and my own."

In the score, there is an instruction to change the tuning, mid-piece. "At one point the third string must be tuned down by a quarter tone," Snowden remarks. "The writing allows the performer to check it against other open strings and to tweak if necessary. This creates a bell-like and often melancholy resonance, which Anderson called a blue color, intended to evoke the vivid blue background of Miro's painting 'Catalan Peasant with Guitar' [which partially inspired the piece]."

There are many time signature changes in in the score as well. "Yes," she says, "the rhythmic sections have such vitality and drive, often gathering momentum toward a decisive climax. I find hints of Balkan folk influences in some of those passages."

The rest of the repertoire for this Julian Bream Trust concert were mostly pieces written for Bream, or are pieces strongly associated with him: *Sonatina, Op. 52* No. 1 (1957) by Lennox Berkeley; *Nocturnal after John Dowland, Op. 70* (1963) by Benjamin Britten; *Segovia, Op. 29* (1925) by Albert Roussel; *Fantasia* (1957) by Roberto Gerhard, *Quatre Pièces Brèves* (1933) by Frank Martin; *Homenaje: pour le tombeau de Claude Debussy* (1920) by Manuel de Falla; and *Suite Compostelana* (1962) by Federico Mompou. Snowden explains the program's selection process: "I had been working on some of those pieces with Bream before the concert was planned. He then suggested some other works, including some that are rarely performed, as well as proposing the idea of performing the Gerhard, Falla, and Roussel as a continuous set. What he loved about every piece in the program was that even though each composer was writing for a relatively unfamiliar and idiosyncratic instrument, each managed to retain his own distinct and unique musical voice and to come up with original, inventive ideas.

"Along with any advice, Bream will always give a reason why. And suddenly it becomes about everything except the guitar itself. It becomes about feeling, energy, movement, love, freedom. He has a way of relating music to all facets of life, from the details to the whole picture, and showing how everything is connected."

In my own interviews with Bream, I have always found an incredible depth in his comments, which always set you thinking along what seems to be an untrodden path. Snowden agrees: "Yes, even just a passing remark from him will often have a certain profundity."

ROOTS AT THE MENUHIN SCHOOL

When the Yehudi Menuhin School opened in London in 1963, it had just 12 pupils. In the following year, the school moved to the countryside, south of London, to a small village called Stoke D'Abernon, near Cobham, and the number of pupils increased to 24 and has continued to grow. Although Menuhin had long wanted to include the guitar as one of the instruments taught there, it wasn't until 2004 that the school was able to welcome guitarists to audition, thanks to the financial assistance offered by members of the Rolling Stones, of all people. Initially the school accepted two British guitarists: Snowden and Tom Ellis, and they were taught by Richard Wright.

"I was 16, and funnily enough it was

thanks to an advert in *Classical Guitar* magazine that I found out about the Rolling Stones' donation," Snowden remembers. "At my state secondary school I had a lovely teacher called Ashley Hards, who gave me his entire collection of the magazines—I probably read back to about 1994! If I hadn't seen that advert, I would never have known that music schools existed, let alone that they would offer bursaries [scholarships]."

Music secondary schools have had some bad press over the years for being competitive "hothouses" that produce young virtuosos with many emotional problems, but Snowden doesn't fit that profile at all. "On the contrary, for me at least, the environment was creative and relaxing," she says. "That was a very precious thing, considering that in my previous school I never felt I could publicly show an interest in my education, and I had become a specialist at hiding and going unnoticed. In my first week at the Menuhin School, I couldn't believe my eyes: People were voluntarily asking teachers questions during lessons and openly pursuing their own interests, from photography to yoga; I began to feel it was OK to be myself.

"The Menuhin School's ethos is that every student who is successful at audition should be able to attend the school, regardless of their financial situation," she adds. "Without the school and its bursary system, there's no way I'd have had access to such an education at that stage. I received weekly lessons in aural, harmony and counterpoint, music history, composition, and piano, which proved to be versatile tools for expressing creativity. And the reduced academic timetable gave me time for my own creative activity, from writing lyrics to scripting a play—although it's probably not one anybody would ever want to perform."

Now, Snowden is back at the Menuhin School—this time working as an assistant guitar teacher. The guitar department there is still small, but has increased to six students coming from all over the world. I wondered whether Snowden has her own approach to teaching, learned through her performing experiences. "I've found it crucial in my own playing to have a reason 'why,'" she says. "That's something I've understood more deeply through my sessions with Julian Bream, and is something I try to bring to my teaching. That 'why' applies to everything—from the smallest scale to the largest. Why play this note softly? Why would the composer have chosen this note and not that note? Why this piece? Why does anybody need you to get up on stage and perform? Why music? For me, that means questioning what I really value—in all aspects of life—and of course those answers are always evolving. Who knows what they'll be in 20 years' time!"

ROBERT PIWKO PHOTO

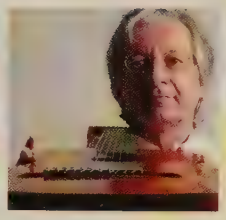
EMBRACING SPONTANEITY

After completing their secondary school studies at the Yehudi Menuhin School, both Snowden and Tom Ellis continued their studies at the Royal College of Music—where Julian Bream had studied, although during Bream's time there was no guitar department, as guitar was not widely considered a serious classical music instrument, Segovia notwithstanding. Ellis and Snowden have been developing their musical careers in distinctively separate ways, but they often return to perform together as a guitar duo, something they have done since their Menuhin School days. As a duo, they were accepted on the IGF Young Artists Platform scheme, which sponsors young guitarists in the early years of their careers, offering them concerts at their various festivals, as well as other promotional activities.

In contrast to that "at home" feeling in her guitar duo, Snowden's performances with her other duo partner—the violinist Joo Yeon Sir—show a completely different aspect of her musical personality: much more fiery and emotionally charged. "The first time I heard Joo Yeon play was at Wigmore Hall," the guitarist recalls. "I was moved to tears in the first piece, and after that she played Milhaud's *Cinéma-Fantasie* with such humor that I had to physically restrain myself from laughing. Here was

FEATURED ARTISTS

William Kanengiser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somebody really playing from the heart, making me laugh and cry in one concert, and it made me think, 'This is what it's all about!' There was such freedom and spontaneity in that playing.

"Recently I watched a documentary about Federico Mompou, one of my absolute favorite composers, who said that all he'd ever tried to do through music was to find 'freedom of thought and freedom of spirit.' That really resonated with me, and it struck me that this may be the motivation behind a lot of music-making. He also said, 'If a composition is sincere, it is good; it cannot be bad.' I love that—although it sounded slightly more profound in French." (Snowden has a British father and a French mother.)

Both Snowden and Joo Yeon Sir are composers as well as performers and they do perform their own compositions together. "That's actually how we started out," Snowden offers. "I showed her my guitar-and-violin piece *Five Impressions,* which was commissioned by the Deal Festival in 2010. We started working on our own arrangements and I was commissioned by the International Guitar Foundation to write us a piece for the London Guitar Festival. Last year we did a very interesting project at the Royal College of Music's Junior Department, in which we gave a series of composition workshops and invited the students to write for us—we ended up with 28 new pieces for the duo!"

SHOWING HER FOLK SIDE

Besides Snowden's busy career in classical-guitar realms, she also performs in an eclectic but mostly traditional folk group called Tir Eolas, who were invited by John Williams to perform at his Shakespeare's Globe series last summer. The group was formed in 2013.

"I was having a 'say yes to everything' week during my first year at the Royal College of Music," Snowden says, "and I saw an advert sent out by our percussionist, Ruairi Glasheen, saying something like, 'Does anybody want to play folk music, maybe do some busking, see where it takes us?' Next thing I knew, we were busking around London, including one particularly memorable episode in Covent Garden involving security guards and us not knowing we needed to have a license. There are five of us in the band now [Snowden, Glasheen, singer/flautist Philippa Mercer, violist Georgie Harris, and bassist Hedi Pinkerfield; all of them sing] and some of the most fun and hilarious moments of my life have taken place with those guys. The band also gives me the opportunity to write songs, which was actually the first musical activity I did as a child, before ever playing a note on the guitar. I used to sing my songs onto a little tape recorder."

In 2015, Tir Eolas released an album called *Stories Sung, Truths Told* featuring some of their original compositions, as well as traditional pieces that reflect their collective roots in English and Irish folk music. Snowden notes, "We'd been writing and arranging music for quite some time and had reached a point where we felt ready to share our material, and recording seemed to be the natural progression. The recording process was creative in itself, as we were able to include some extra instruments and parts that we can't have onstage."

I asked Snowden if she hoped to make a solo classical-guitar recording as well. "It *is* something I'd like to do, and with repertoire that really means something to me. The direct connection with an audience in performance has always been something which engages and moves me, and it takes a great deal of thought to work out how best to translate that into a recording."

Is Julian Bream aware that Snowden is also a composer? "Yes, he is! Until recently, I tended to write for instruments other than the solo guitar, often because I'd be asked to write for specific performers or projects. So I've ended up with music for string orchestra, solo harpsichord, oboe and percussion duo, guitar and flute duo—all sorts! There's an organization here in the UK called the Park Lane Group who have been putting on concerts of new music and commissioning composers for the past 60 years. They've asked me to write a solo guitar work for their 2017 series, and Julian knows about that. So perhaps I'll play that for him when it's finished."

There's no doubt that when Snowden performs as a soloist, she displays quite a special demeanor—a combination of calm, happiness, and a focus on the interpretation, along with the technique that allows for full expression of musical ideas. "I see practice as the process of setting up the conditions to allow complete spontaneity in performance," she explains. "I'm not trying to fix anything—I'm trying to hear what's actually happening in the music, to hear all of its components and respond to them afresh each time. I was very inspired by Stanislavski's book *An Actor Prepares*, which teaches this approach to actors. Being 'present' means being vulnerable, but that's what can transmit a sense of true generosity to the audience.

"Similarly to watching a play, hearing a musical performance can only occur in that very moment—as opposed to, say, reading a book. That's why timing is crucial. That could be in the exact rhythmic intention of a passage, or the subtlety of one's rubato, or the precise amount of time one holds a pause. It's what can keep an audience hooked." **CG**

WHAT SHE PLAYS

'I play a Christopher Dean guitar made in 2006, with D'Addario normal tension strings. I find that his guitars have a warmth and clarity of sound and are exceptionally responsive to a wide array of colors and sonorities. In my folk ensemble, Tir Eolas, I use a nylon-string Taylor guitar—often in alternative tunings—as well as my Christopher Dean.'

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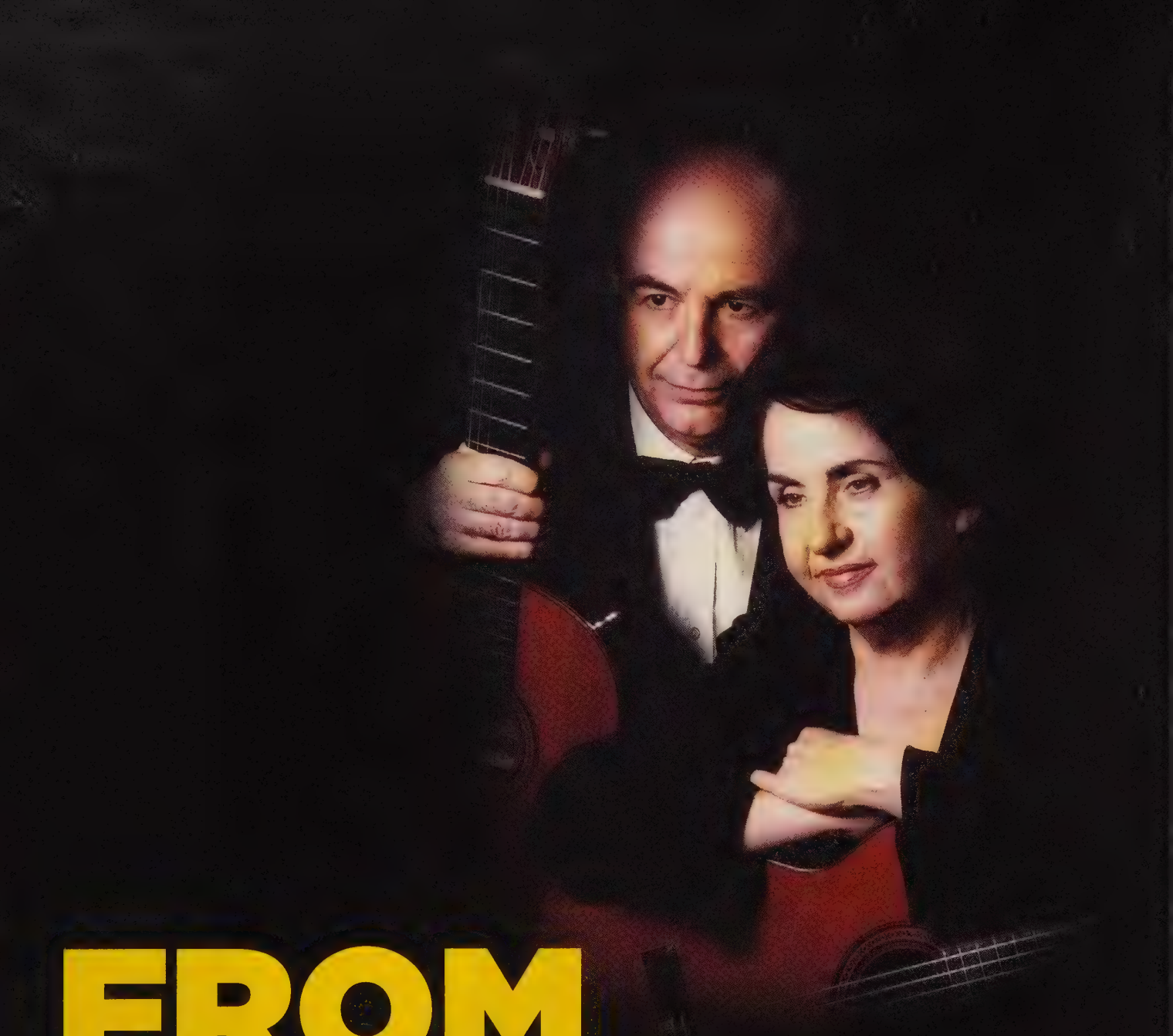


FROM GREECE WITH LOVE

THE DUO EVANGELOS & LIZA HAVE BEEN MAKING BEAUTIFUL MUSIC TOGETHER ON AND OFFSTAGE FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS

BY GRAHAM WADE

Evangelos Assimakopoulos and his wife Liza Zoe are considered among the finest classical guitar duos of their generation. Since their arrival on the international music scene in 1967, Evangelos & Liza have played duo concerts throughout the world, and appeared with many major orchestras. Segovia regarded them as worthy successors to the Presti-Lagoya Duo and commented, "I cordially wish Evangelos and Liza to conquer the high estimation of the public as they have conquered mine!"

CLASSICAL GUITAR: At what ages did you start playing the guitar?

LIZA: We were both born in 1940 and began playing guitar at the age of 13. We studied with Dimitris Fampas [1921-1996] at the National Conservatory of Athens. At that time the guitar was known mainly as a popular instrument, not a classical one.

EVANGELOS: Fampas was a soloist and teacher who inspired pupils and taught good technique. Such teaching was rare at the time. It was only in August 1950 that Segovia taught for the first time in Siena, Italy, exploring composers, repertory, tone, and all that. Fampas, one of Segovia's pupils at Siena in 1954, brought all this to his students.

CG: When did you first meet each other?

EVANGELOS: During the '50s, we met as students in Fampas's class. He used to organize concerts for his advanced pupils. In 1960–61, we received the first guitar diplomas with honors at the National Conservatory of Athens, recognition of Fampas' pedagogic abilities.

CG: When did you decide to form a professional duo?

EVANGELOS: At first, we played solo recitals, building independent reputations. This changed when Presti and Lagoya [Ida Presti and Alexandre Lagoya] visited Athens in 1960. This inspired us to change direction. Fampas invited the duo for dinner along with advanced students. We had an opportunity to play for Presti and Lagoya and experience the excitement of hearing them perform. We realized that the guitar duo represented a wider musical canvas.

CG: What are the attractions of duo playing?

LIZA: Cooperation, collaboration, and musical dialogue. There are more options, the music breathes more, technical and musical limitations can more easily be surpassed. There is greater sound production, variety of articulation, and wider range of colors.

CG: What are the special problems of duo playing?

EVANGELOS: Our ideal is to make two guitars sound as one. We spend hours on technically simple musical phrases, on coordination, working on tone, and such things. Also, there is the correlation of interpretive views. A musical phrase spontaneous for the soloist becomes a topic of debate for a duo.

CG: When and where were your first concerts together?

EVANGELOS: In 1960, we performed duo concerts, and in 1963 we played in Athens and other Greek cities mixing solos and duos. These concerts established us as a duo in music and in life. But then we became interested in presenting only duo music, enlarging our program with transcriptions, as well as getting Greek composers to write new works.

CG: Around this time you also studied with the Presti-Lagoya Duo.

LIZA: Yes, in 1964 we got a scholarship at the Presti-Lagoya Summer Academy in Nice, France. The focus for Presti and Lagoya was tone. They played with the right side of the nails. During three summers at the Academy, we heard their tone qualities in concerts. This was the most colorful, bright sound we had ever heard.

CG: And then of course you got married!

LIZA: Yes. Presti and Lagoya were "best man" at our marriage! Their wedding gift was to present us in their concert at Menton [on the Cote d'Azur in France], where we played a program in the first half. All through the years, we had a warm friendship with them, which inspired us in our career. Ida Presti's death in April 1967 deprived the world of an immensely gifted guitarist.

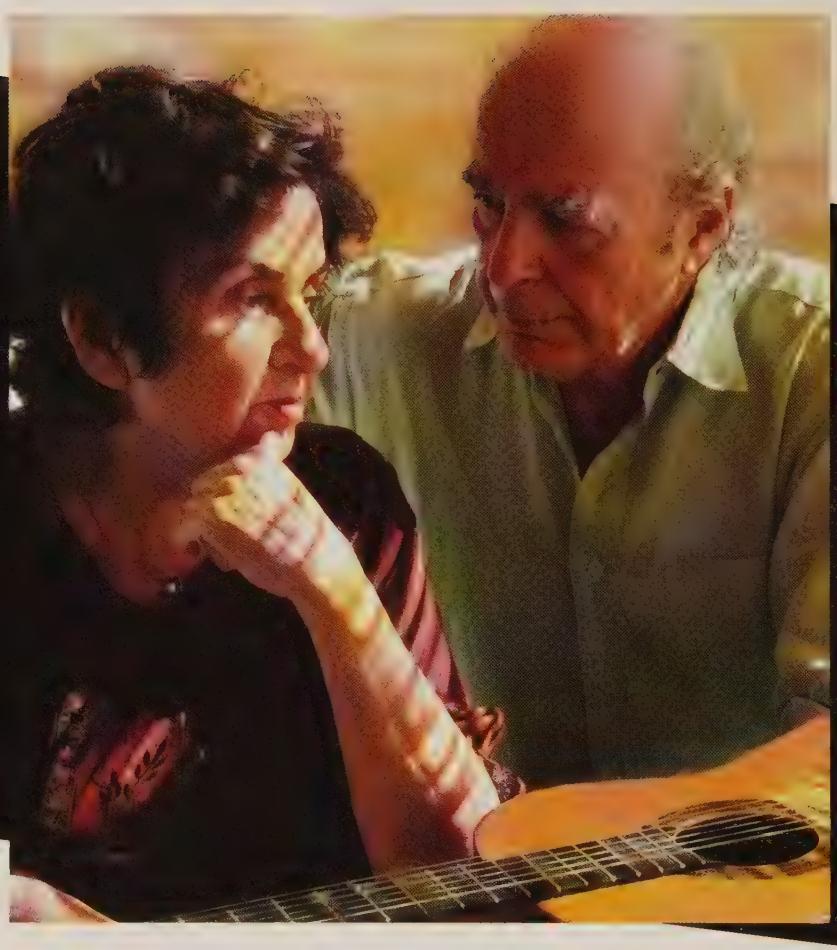
CG: When did you first meet Segovia?

EVANGELOS: We first met Andrés Segovia in September 1967 in his summer house in Granada, Spain.

With Maestro Andrés Segovia
Academy of Santiago de Compostela

WHAT THEY PLAY

According to Evangelos, from 1964 to 1969 he and Liza played spruce-top Robert Bouchet guitars (like those favored by Ida Presti and Alexandre Lagoya), but since have mostly used cedar-top Ramirez guitars. "We have also done some tours and made recordings with guitars by Greek guitar-makers Nicholas Ioannou, who lives in New York, and Pavlos Gypas of Athens, both of spruce-top construction."



LIZA: We had lessons with Segovia for three summers at the Academy of Santiago de Compostela and at his house, Los Olivos, in Herradura, near Granada. In 1969, Segovia gave us a letter of recommendation in which he named us as the world's best guitar duo and introduced us to guitar festivals as well as to his English agent, Ibbs & Tillet. Above all, he recommended us to his American agent, Sol Hurok, a mighty agency. During these years, we made 19 tours of the United States and Canada, playing hundreds of recitals and concerts with orchestras.

CG: There seemed to be an abundance of concert opportunities in those days.

LIZA: During the '70s and '80s, the classical guitar had a sudden explosion throughout the world. This opened up opportunities for guitarists to give international concert tours and master classes.

CG: Do you think those decades were the best years?

EVANGELOS: Certainly. During the '70s, the French newspaper *Le Monde* mentioned that every year one million guitars were sold in Europe and another million in the US. We remember the delirium with [Joaquín Rodrigo's] *Concierto de Aranjuez* played by [Narciso] Yepes, and many students came to the National Conservatory, where we were teaching, wanting to learn *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* or *Asturias*!

CG: What about the 21st century?

EVANGELOS: Everything has changed. Concert halls used to be packed with audiences enjoying a two-hour program. How many guitar artists today play their one-hour program in packed halls? Nowadays things change so fast that great differences are visible every five years!

CG: Have things progressed?

LIZA: We live in a time of speed, a time invaded by computers. This has an effect on music. Today's guitarists express this state. They play faster, more note-perfect, and more aggressively than earlier players. Fifty years ago, guitarists did not have the velocity nor the same information about music as today's players. But they had a genuine love for the instrument and embraced the guitar with great affection. One could be touched by their playing.

CG: Can you say anything about your career philosophy?

LIZA: This word "career" is a fulfillment. We have not pursued our "career" to become trapped in an ill-paced lifestyle. We

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were never forced to sacrifice our philosophy of life. In 1969, John Duarte suggested that to be at the top we would have to live in London, New York, or Paris. We did not follow it up and we never regretted it. During our career we have made many friends and enjoyed sharing our music, but we also have our family.

EVANGELOS: We have been lucky with audiences. They came to our concerts to listen to chamber music. [Now] audiences go to solo recitals to criticize and censure. So aggressive! Today, many musicians dream of a career, and lead an inhuman life. They shut themselves off, isolated in one room for hours. They push toward their goals with excessive pressure. A career in art is not just a job, it's a creation. There is no reason for any sacrifice in the name of success or career. These things are the products of creativity, and one derives from the other. If a musician enjoys devotion to music, the main reward is having lived life doing something the person loved. If a guitarist gains recognition, that is even better.

CG: Tell us about the guitar in Greece.

LIZA: Greece traditionally is a seedbed of guitar. As a people with strong temperament, we love our folk music, songs, and traditional dances. Recently, in spite of the terrible economic situation, there have been many guitar activities. The difference between past and present is the quality. Certainly, the guitar in Greece and everywhere has moved on in both directions, forward and backwards, with effects and side effects.

CG: What changes have you seen in students over the years?

EVANGELOS: I have gained much from my students. A bad pupil is one from whom the teacher has nothing to gain. A student acquires musical concepts from the teacher, and the teacher gains fresh approaches as well as the satisfaction of the ultimate creation. The majority of today's students don't have the same love of the guitar. They have better grounding and are more educated but often view the guitar as a means to an occupation. Idealists— real lovers of the guitar—are fewer each year. Today, the majority have little regard for tone quality. They may be influenced by styles of guitar where tone has no importance.

Recital at Athens Megaron Concert Hall (2008)

CG: What is your favorite repertoire?

LIZA: We play music of all periods, from the Baroque to the contemporary. In the end, the emphasis is not on different kinds of music—there is simply good or bad music.

CG: When did you first start recording?

EVANGELOS: Our first recording was in 1965, the first Greek classical guitar recording ever. Since then, we have made 16 recordings playing composers of every period, including three concertos.

CG: You recently organized the 25th Patras Festival. How did that go?

LIZA: This festival started in 1991 in Patras, third largest city in Greece. It has become very successful, attracting 150 students every April. We provide the students with classes, lectures, and recitals from Greek and foreign artists. Guests this year were Roland Dyens and Anton Baranov, who gave concerts and classes. On the final day, they were jury members in a high-level guitar competition. Thus, there is a guitar fiesta for four whole days and we are really proud of it! **CG**

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THE KATONA TWINS

FORGE THEIR OWN PATH

BY STEVE MARSH

Peter and Zoltán Katona

The identical twins Peter and Zoltán Katona were born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1968, and began their musical education at the age of ten. They have given recitals in many major concert venues around the world and have won numerous prestigious competitions in Hungary, France, Germany, London, and the United States. They've put out nine CDs so far, covering a wide spectrum of music ranging from Mozart, Bach, and Scarlatti, to Queen, the Doors, and the Beatles. Consummately skilled and precise, at times they also exhibit a surprisingly relaxed and laid-back manner onstage, coupled with their habit of performing certain pieces standing up. They have deservedly become among the classical guitar world's musical "must see" performers.

On the day it was announced that the "fifth Beatle"—producer George Martin—had died, I happened to be traveling to the birthplace of the Fab Four to interview one-half of the Katona Twins, Peter Katona, at his home in the heart of the city of Liverpool, where the twins have lived (separately) for many years.

CLASSICAL GUITAR: Is it correct that the school you and your brother Zoltán went to required students to learn a musical instrument?

PETER KATONA: Yes. When we were ten years old, our music teacher noticed that we had a talent for clapping-back complicated rhythms, and our mother decided we should change to a special school where, besides the general subjects, we also had musical instruction every day. It might be choir or learning to read music, and everybody in our class had to learn to play an instrument. It was in the communist times [in Hungary], but luckily for us [composer] Zoltán Kodaly was not just a great composer and a brilliant pedagogue, but also an influential person. He persuaded the Hungarian politicians that learning music was important and beneficial for the development and education of youngsters. His idea was that learning to play a musical instrument teaches you discipline and concentration, which would then spill over into the other subjects. [So] a nationwide experiment with special musical classes and free instrumental education was started.

CG: Did you both choose the guitar simultaneously?

KATONA: We were both very keen to play guitar, but as with most teenagers, we were first attracted to the electric guitar and to popular music. However, that was not taught in the music schools of Hungary in those days. Classical guitar was the next best thing, so we started playing that, intending to change to the electric guitar at a later date. But that never happened because we learned to love the warm sound of the classical guitar and we realized that it was the instrument we really wanted to play.

CG: At that stage, did you get to hear recordings of guitarists such as Segovia, Julian Bream, and John Williams?

KATONA: At the beginning, not at all, but one day about three years after we started playing, our guitar teacher turned up with a tape recorder and played us recordings of Bream, Williams, Pepe Romero, and Paco de Lucía. He made copies of the tapes for us and we were fascinated by them and would listen to them all the time. Nowadays you can simply go on the internet and listen and even see amazing guitarists perform in your living room. In those days that was virtually impossible, especially in communist Hungary. Often, we couldn't even guess how some guitarists, such as one of our heroes, Paco de Lucía, produced some of those amazing sounds.

CG: Did you ever get to see him perform in concert?

KATONA: Yes, but only about ten years later, when he came to play in a large arena in Budapest. I'll never forget how surprised we were to see him playing with his legs crossed, which was supposed to be all wrong!

CG: Well, some people even play standing up, you know!

KATONA: Yes, I know! Truly shocking! [*Laughs*] We were always told that you had to play the guitar in the "classical" sitting position, using a footstool. Then, to see someone who we thought was the best guitarist in the world, *not* playing like that was a real shock.

It's funny how many classical guitarists still believe that using the footstool with the raised left leg is the only and true traditional way. Historical drawings prove that at least two of the very best guitarists of the classical period did not play like that at all. Fernando Sor and Dionisio Aguado both held the instrument on the right leg and supported it either by a chair or a table or a special guitar stand invented for that very purpose. I still think that the so-called classical position has many advantages, and I still do play that way fairly often, especially when sight-reading. However, there are obvious [ergonomic] problems with it. The invention and widespread use of new devices to support the guitar, instead of using the footstool, takes pressure off the player's spine, which is a great development.

CG: When you and your brother were learning together at school, did you both progress at the same rate?

KATONA: Yes. Part of the reason was that for a while we had just the one guitar between us and we shared a room together. If you live in the same room, it is very obvious and extremely annoying when your brother is doing something slightly better than you. It makes you want to keep up with him, and hopefully get even better. Also, if Zoltán practiced and I didn't, it reminded me that I had to play, too, which was quite beneficial, and the exchange of ideas helped us develop both technically and musically. In those days, we mostly played the solo guitar repertoire and only very rarely the odd piece together. That changed dramatically after we heard the Assad Brothers in a concert in Germany when we were about 22 years old. We were

so taken by their brilliant ensemble play and the fullness of the sound, that playing solo all of a sudden seemed utterly pointless to us. That was our "Eureka!" moment.

CG: How often do you two play your own arrangements?

KATONA: These days, always. When we first started playing as a duo, we used to perform other people's arrangements. We even made a demo recording of somebody's two-guitar version of a harpsichord piece. However, after hearing the original, we realized that the arrangement was not very well done at all, and we decided not to make that mistake again. Now, even when playing original duets by, say, Fernando Sor or [Mauro] Giuliani, we will change between the parts so that each of us has a fair share of solos and accompaniment. Those duets were often written with a master and a student in mind. But for a duo that has two equal players, it would be silly and extremely boring not to take turns when playing the melody.

CG: Do you ever quarrel about who plays what?

KATONA: Not really, since we generally produce two equally challenging parts. Although it has happened that I liked a particular part of an arrangement—its technical or musical challenge—and ended up giving myself the voice that played it. At the same time, when something seems too difficult and I don't feel like practicing it, occasionally I think to myself: "That seems like too much sweat and hard work—let Zoltán have it!" [*Laughs*] Since the audience doesn't necessarily notice who played the more difficult part, I still end up looking just as clever as he looks.

CG: How do you decide what sort of programs to prepare?

KATONA: If no special program requests are made by the organizer, we generally agree on a program that seems suitable for a particular venue and audience. At times, it may be that we are requested to play certain works, or a program with a special theme. For example, we've been asked to play a Hungarian program a few weeks from now. But since there are not too many original pieces for two guitars written by Hungarian composers, we decided to arrange a couple of other works we always wanted to play. I am just finalizing an arrangement of one of Zoltán Kodaly's orchestra piece called *Dances of Galanta*.

When recording a CD, we like to focus on a particular composer or musical style. We did a CD of music by Joaquín Rodrigo. But, since he only wrote two pieces for guitar duets, we arranged some of his piano works to fill the 60-minute CD.

CG: You have also recorded CDs devoted entirely to the works of Vivaldi, de Falla, Bach, Albeniz, and Piazzolla.

KATONA: Yes. With the Piazzolla CD, it was the same [as with the Rodrigo]. Besides the *Tango Suite*—his only original piece for two guitars—we had to choose and arrange many of his other pieces, such as his *Concerto Liege*, originally written for guitar, bandoneon, and strings.

CG: You play 99 per cent of your repertoire together from memory. Do you have a specific method of learning the score?

KATONA: Yes, we do. Both of us have really bad memories, which strangely sometimes works in our favor—for example, if you want to change a fingering. Unfortunately, it does not work with pieces we have played for a very long time. Some old fingerings are so solidly etched into your memory that it is nearly impossible to erase them. It is especially annoying when, after working on a new and much better fingering for several months, you find yourself playing your old fingering again at a concert. It can be a really scary thing!

Memorizing a duo piece is more complex than learning a solo piece. If you are a soloist and have a memory lapse, you can simply jump to any place in the piece and continue. In a duo piece, you can't do that. Besides your own part, you have to know what the other guitar plays, so that you can join in at the right place. There are certain techniques to do that. We divide a piece into sections and learn to recognize when the other player gets to a certain part in the piece where you can join in. We actually practice that in rehearsals by pretending to have a complete memory blackout. One of us plays through the piece and tells the other player randomly when to stop playing. He then has to wait and listen until he recognizes the next agreed joining point before he can continue playing, only to be stopped again a few seconds later.

CG: Has it happened often that you've lost your place on stage?

KATONA: I know I should not say this, but unfortunately, it happens all the time! [*Laughs.*] It is very unlikely, though, for both of us to lose our place at the same time. Even if that happened, we would both just jump to the next agreed part and continue from there. If you do it well, most of the audience will never notice, since one guitar keeps playing, and you can get away with it as long as you don't play too many wrong notes.

CG: Do you ever compose your own music?

KATONA: We do, although it is a recent development, and we haven't composed a large volume of works yet. Audiences always seem to appreciate listening to a piece composed by the performer. A few days ago, we played one of my compositions in Spain and I felt that it made the concert a much more personal experience for the audience, as they could not hear that piece performed by anybody else.

CG: When did you begin writing your own music?

KATONA: It all began in 2009, when we were asked to take part in a concert tour where there would be a mixture of pop and classical music, in 42 arenas across Europe. We were invited as the only classical soloists that year.

CG: The "European Night of the Proms" tour.

KATONA: Exactly. We were asked to make arrangements of some well-known pop pieces associated with the guitar and combine them in a medley. Rather than just putting one piece after the other, we wanted to make it more special by incorporating our own musical styles. The first piece was "Sweet Home Alabama" [by the American rock band Lynyrd Skynyrd]. I took the rhythm of the song and composed a 17-bar Bach-like intro to it. For an intro, it was rather long, and when it finally turned into "Sweet Home Alabama," it took the audience completely by surprise. They absolutely loved it! Two Michael Jackson songs and Nirvana's famous "Smells Like Teen

Spirit" followed, connected with short Baroque-style compositions. It was a huge success, and although I composed only about 40 bars of the medley, I guess I could say that it was my first composition performed live—and in front of 18,000 people. In any case, it was a promising start and we decided to compose more music.

Perhaps because of my Bach-like first piece, I suppose that my compositional style leans more toward our classical roots, whereas Zoltán tends to write in a more "popular" fashion. In our regular classical concerts, we can easily get away with performing my pieces, but would not dare to play Zoltán's music, which is why we tend to perform my compositions more frequently than his. [*Laughs.*]

CG: On that concert tour, you played to half a million people in vast arenas around Europe. What did you use for amplification? I presume it was a wireless system?

KATONA: Yes, but we had been using wireless amplification a long time before the "Night of the Proms" concerts. We used to feel that plugging in the instruments can spoil the illusion of a classical guitar concert for some people. However, it happened often in the past that even hard-core classical guitarists did not always notice when we used wireless amplification. At the "Proms" concerts, we used Ramirez guitars we thought had the best built-in amplification systems. They are truly great instruments! In fact, at those concerts we had to use *two* wireless systems each—one for the guitar and one for the ear monitors, which was a very new experience for us because we had to play with a click track. It was rather unusual for classical performers, but that was the only way. We were performing in huge arenas with an orchestra that was sometimes nearly 50 meters away. It was very, very difficult to do at the beginning, but you get used to it after a while. In one of the concerts, there was a problem with the computer and our in-ear monitors didn't work properly. We could only hear the orchestra and the click track, but not our own playing, which was rather scary.

But it was quite an interesting and a very important experience for us in many ways. The biggest challenge was to perform for an audience that had never been to a classical concert before. Luckily, the organizers advised us on what to perform. It was their suggestion that we play something classical in a contemporary version, and to put together a medley of popular songs that the audience would recognize. It was a huge success and it seemed that everybody enjoyed it.

'We were so taken by the Assad Brothers' brilliant ensemble play and the fullness of the sound, that playing solo all of a sudden seemed utterly pointless to us. That was our 'Eureka!' moment'

—PETER KATONA

CG: Did the size of these audiences make you nervous at all?

KATONA: Oh, yes, especially at the beginning. I will never forget the experience of walking onstage in front of 18,000 people for the very first time. They were incredibly loud and I thought, "No, I'm not going out there!" [*Laughs.*] Some friends told us afterwards that we were as white as chalk! But after three or four times you get used to it and then it is no scarier than playing just for 20 people.

After the tour, some of the performances were uploaded on YouTube and we were criticized by some classical guitarists for playing that kind of music in that kind of environment: "What happened to them? They used to be serious classical guitarists." We *still* are, but you have to put our experience in perspective. We were asked if we wanted to play in live concerts for half a million people. Even if we played every day for the rest of our lives for an average-size classical audience, we would not be able to reach that many people. It would have been crazy to turn down such a huge chance. Plus, I don't feel that we had to sacrifice our integrity as classical players.

If anything, that tour has taught us many things: We extended our arranging skills, started to compose, learned to play with a click track using in-ear monitors, and started playing standing up, which we previously did not think was possible at all. Now, we even do it in our classical concerts, and audiences, with the exception of a few classical guitarists, find it to be a welcome addition to our performance style. There are some pieces where moving around actually helps with the interpretation. For example, if you have a solo, you can take a small step forward, just like a singer would do in an opera, and it helps to focus the audience's attention.

CG: So how do you perform in concerts now—is it a mixture of sitting and standing?

KATONA: Yes, it is. We tend to lively, dramatic, and extroverted pieces standing; and calm, introverted pieces sitting. Not only does it help with the communication, but it also adds an extra dimension and variety to our performances. The only difficulty is that you have to adjust your technique when standing up.

CG: Is it a big adjustment?

KATONA: It certainly is. Some techniques, such as the rest stroke for the fingers, are surprisingly easy when standing up, and others become more difficult because the instrument is simply not as stable as it is when you sit.

CG: So, what's next?

KATONA: We plan to do more CDs in a non-classical style, on which we will include more of our own compositions. We are also planning a classical album of our own arrangements of opera themes by Mozart, Rossini, Bizet, and Tchaikovsky. **CG**

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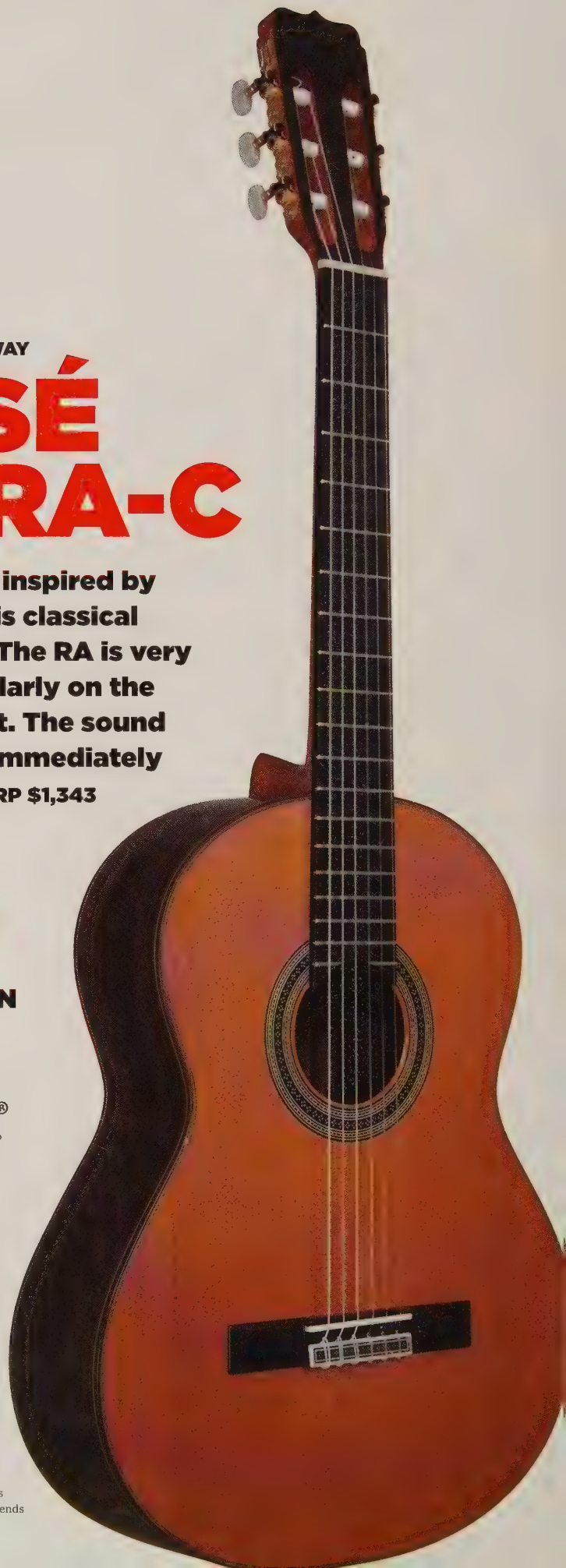

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A FEW WORDS ABOUT *STAGE & STUDIO*

Welcome to the fourth *Stage & Studio* quarterly supplement, which you have found either tucked into the pages of one of Stringletter's four magazines—*Acoustic Guitar*, *Strings*, *Ukulele*, and *Classical Guitar*—or downloaded online free through one of those magazines' website. Though the reaction to *Stage & Studio* has been mostly positive, some readers are still somewhat confused by it—"What is this thing in the middle of my beloved [fill in magazine name]?" Perhaps this is the moment to articulate the purpose of and intentions for the supplement.

Stage & Studio is the acoustic musician's quarterly guide to creating, performing, technology, and business—designed to educate players, regardless of instrumental specialty, about the techniques, trends, products, and resources that help them express their musicality and develop their careers. Past issues have covered such subjects as finding affordable recording facilities, building set lists, technical performing tips, and songwriting and business issues important to aspiring and professional musicians. Upcoming future editorial will feature home recording, online music education, notation software, dealing with copyrights and royalties, and much more for the performing and recording musician.

And please, let us know what sorts of articles would be helpful to *you*!

—Blair Jackson
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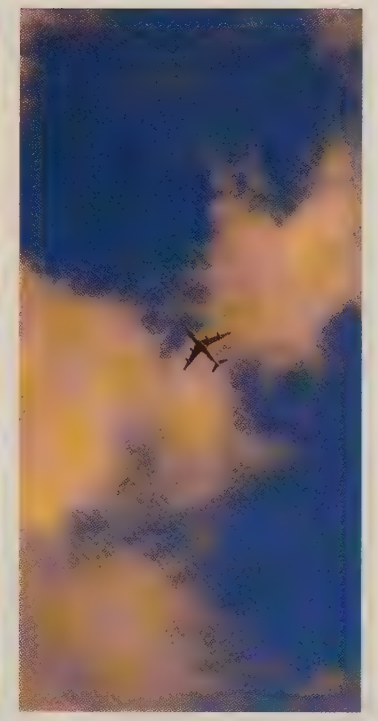

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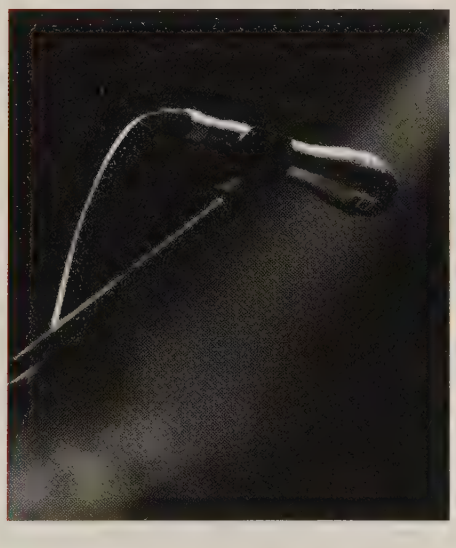

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ADD 'WELLNESS' TO YOUR REPERTOIRE

University guitar program keeps musicians in tune with their health

BY KAREN PETERSON

Classical guitar students with the Bolton Guitar Studies program at the University of Arizona in Tucson get more than expert musical instruction. They have full-time access to a wellness and nutrition coach whose singular goal is to help them translate all the knowledge gained, hard work, and creative energy into peak performances—onstage and off, today and into their bright futures—by being in tune with their health.

Elizabeth Sheppard's work, which she terms "cognitive performance nutrition," benefits all clients interested in boosting their potential. But she does have an inside track on the physical and mental challenges musicians face, and not just because she once played viola: Sheppard's daughter Grace, now 17, is a rising classical guitar star. At age 14, Grace not only won first place at the 2013 Guitar Foundation of America International Youth Competition, she was the first American female to win the award—and it was her first-ever competition.

Sheppard, with degrees in health education and nutritional science, had already been working with Grace, who began playing guitar at 6, the two of them gauging sleep, exercise, diet, and one of Sheppard's key confidence-building protocols—visualizing the outcome—in terms of any benefits gained physically and mentally. Grace had also recently started studying with Thomas Patterson, who founded and heads the university's acclaimed classical guitar program.

After her daughter's victory, Sheppard approached Patterson with an idea that had been percolating: She would offer her services cost-free for a semester, a pilot program of sorts. "I felt strongly about what I could do with his students," says Sheppard.

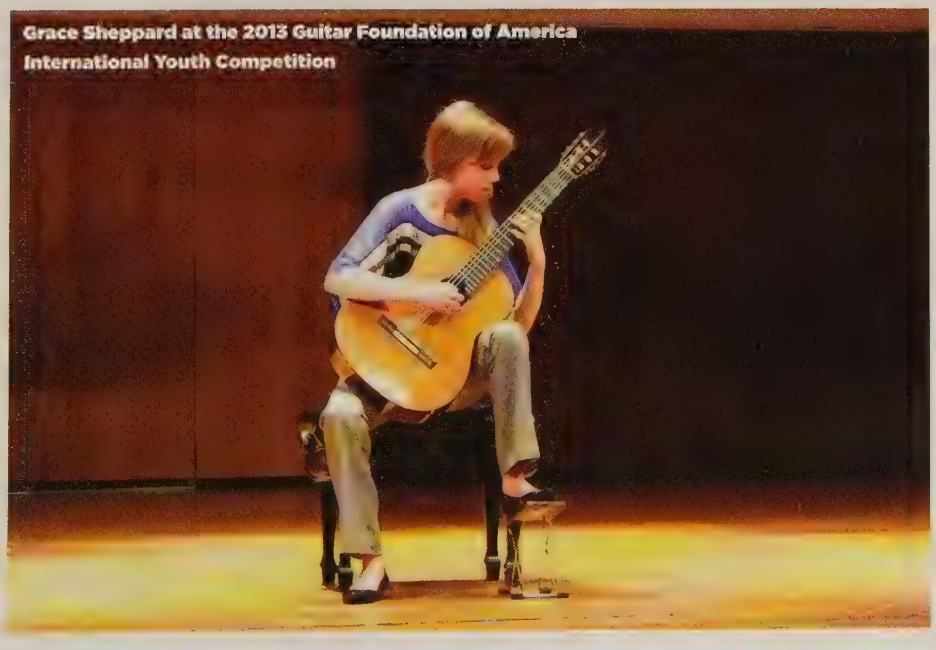
Patterson agreed, and when the trial run ended successfully, the school brought Sheppard on as a paid consultant. Two years in, Patterson couldn't be happier with the results.

"We're the only music school with a health performance coach," he says. "Holistic and nutrition-based, it's about making proper lifestyle choices and establishing patterns that will serve students their entire lives, whether they choose a career in music or not."

THE CHOICE TO BE HEALTHY

A familiar face at the music school, Sheppard leads lectures and group discussions on wellness and nutrition, and she also works with individuals. She attends all the performances, the practices, and the competitions. She's at master classes, reminding attendees of the weekly meditation, or, when the subject comes up, extoling the virtues of various wellness approaches, such as taking fish oil, which she terms an "incredibly strong supplement for cognitive thinking and happiness"—noting, too, that the happier you are, the less you fear things like, as in the case of many students, performing.

The initial approach to her wellness repertoire—a mix of East and West, acupuncture and meditation, regular workouts and diet—is about acquainting students with a natural fact: There are ways to take charge of stress or physical limitations that can make you feel great, and there are also ways to enhance memory and dexterity that are healthful and easy.



Grace Sheppard at the 2013 Guitar Foundation of America International Youth Competition

EASY WAYS TO BOOST PERFORMANCE

Health and wellness coach Elizabeth Sheppard shares a few easy-to-follow tips on increasing your performance.

• A day or two in advance of an audition, start drinking more water; even being 1–2 percent dehydrated can vastly reduce cognitive abilities. The recommendation: Drink about 64 ounces of pure water per day, which greatly helps with energy, stamina, and mental clarity for the day of your performance.

• Limit your intake of sugar and refined carbohydrates, which cause blood sugar swings that can result in increased feelings of anxiousness and stress. In addition, sugary foods can create sleepiness, induce mental fogginess, and lessen the ability to focus.

• In between practice sessions, take time for a 10-minute walk, or do several minutes of light stretching. Moving your body increases circulation and reawakens your brain, improving your focus when you return to practice.

• If you are a musician with a rosemary plant in your garden, you're in luck! Rosemary contains essential oils that, when smelled, alert a section of the brain to facilitate memory and recall. Try smelling crushed rosemary leaves or rosemary oil before you begin learning and memorizing a new piece.

"It's about understanding that there's a choice in how we feel, a choice we make every day," says Sheppard. "And good choices lead to better performances in anything—from competitions to life itself."

The bottom line, she notes, is "the better you feel, the more confident you are. And when you're confident, anything can happen."

Bin Hu, a Doctor of Musical Arts student, says he "felt a significant difference" after working with Sheppard on his stress-related back pain and insomnia. "When I met with Elizabeth, she recommended a couple of health suppliments, such as melatonin to support my sleep," he says. "She also taught me how to meditate and stretch, to relax the mind and the body.

"The most beneficial thing I learned is how to prepare for a performance," Hu adds. "She gave me advice on diet and taught me a couple of acupressure points for overcoming anxiety. I really felt a significant difference after working with her."

Steven Lerman, a doctoral student as well as a graduate teaching assistant, sought Sheppard's expertise in the weeks leading up to his doctoral qualifying recital. All circumstances are different, and in Lerman's case, aside from teaching and full-time studies, he has a one-year-old daughter. "It is extremely difficult for me to have the energy and focus to prepare for recitals and competitions," he says. "Elizabeth helped me strategize on healthy nutritional habits to maximize the practice time I was able to get."

The most effective work came the weekend before the recital. "We came up with an hourly plan for the day of my recital, from wake-up to walking onstage," he says. "We planned everything, from food to drinks to light exercise and time outdoors. By the time I walked onstage I was completely in the zone and prepared to share all of my hard work."

TEA AND COCONUT OIL TO THE RESCUE

Sheppard assures that she is not the "food police," nor does judgment come into play. "I'm there to empower, never to shame," she says. What she brings are the tools for students like Lerman and Hu to use as they explore new and better habits for whatever is preventing them from feeling their best—a nervous stomach before a big competition; a stiff neck; back and elbow pain; problems sleeping; stress and anxiety in general.

From there, the quest is to find a workable solution. The answer could be as simple as sipping warm green tea with with a couple teaspoons of coconut oil—a combination that Sheppard says gives "an immediate boost of beneficial fuel for the brain," or getting a full night's sleep (but not necessarily the night before—studies indicate that the best rest is a good night's sleep 48 hours before a pending event).

Sheppard is currently writing a book on nutrition and wellness, and hopes it will find its way onto music-school reading lists. She's also exploring other opportunities with University of Arizona music programs, including the possibility of working with violin students.

For now, though, she can take pride in the lasting effects of her work. Kathy Acosta Zavala met with Sheppard two years ago. Zavala, who is now pursuing a master's in classical guitar interpretation at the University of Alicante in Spain, says the coaching she received from Sheppard "still resonates," adding, "I have to thank Elizabeth for helping me understand the huge importance of health and mental coaching needed to get to this next step in my career." S&S

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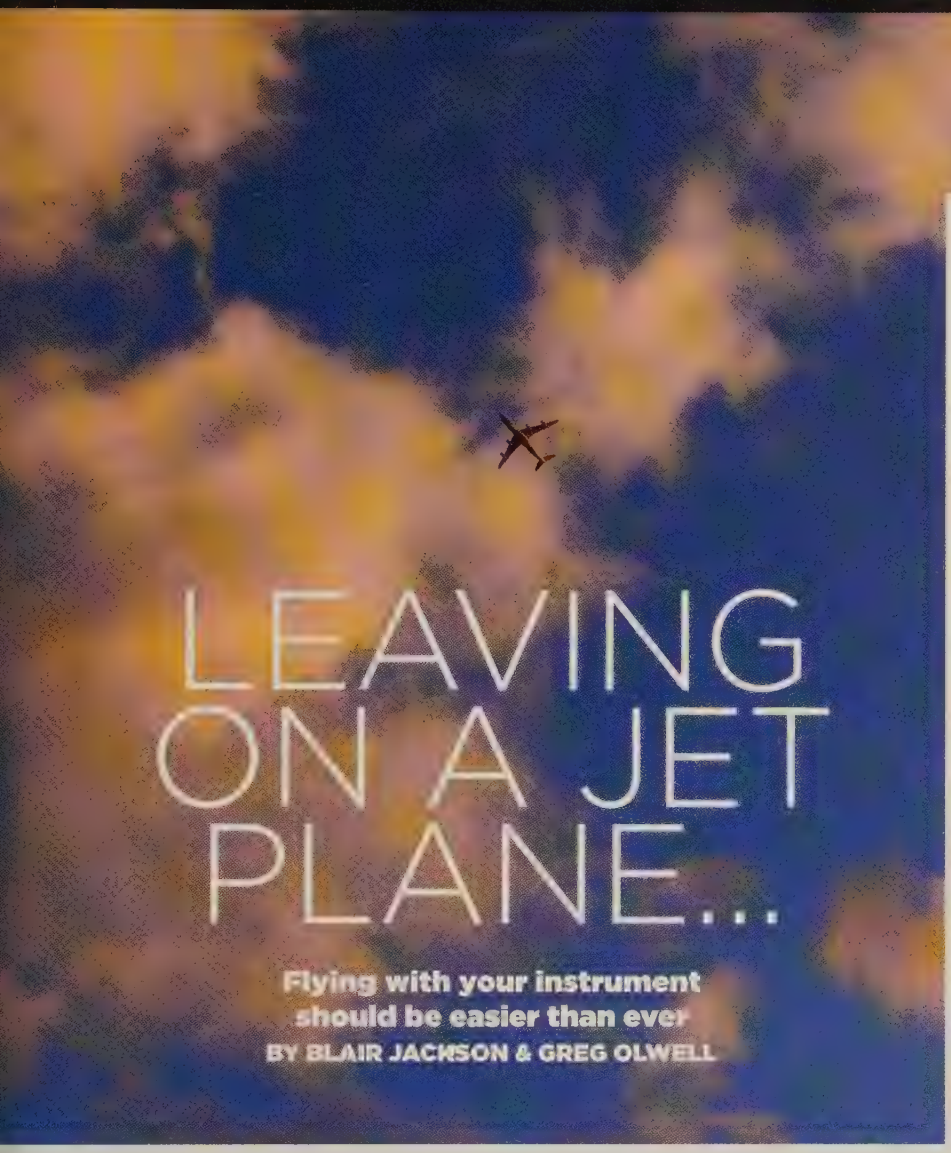


LEAVING ON A JET PLANE...

Flying with your instrument should be easier than ever

BY BLAIR JACKSON & GREG OLWELL

Let's face it: Even under the best circumstances, flying with your instrument can be difficult and nerve-wracking. The potential of harm coming to your "baby" is both real and unrelenting—from airport curbside, to jostling in the terminal, passing through ever-heightening security, boarding the plane, and then scrambling to find space for your oddly shaped instrument case in tight overhead compartments, there's nothing easy about negotiating the potential minefield of perils for your precious instrument.

If it makes you feel any better, it used to be a lot worse. Not so long ago, musicians carrying instrument cases onboard—*anything* to keep the careless and sometimes malicious ground crew from tossing your instrument into the baggage department like a child's rag doll—occasionally had to tussle with flight attendants who believed that stowing instruments in the overhead bins prevented "real" carry-ons (i.e. small suitcases) from occupying that sacred space, and forced musicians to check their cargo in the dark, dangerous recesses below. Yikes!

However, in March 2015, new guidelines developed by the US Department of Transportation, airline industry trade groups, and the American Federation of Musicians were announced and they should make flying with an instrument considerably easier. The DOT implemented the new guidelines as a requirement of Section 403 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, which requires US airlines to accept musical instruments as carry-on or checked baggage, provided certain conditions are met.

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR NEW RIGHTS:

IF THERE IS SPACE, IT'S YOURS. Every carrier in the US must allow a musician to stow a small instrument, like a guitar or violin, in a suitable baggage compartment, such as an overhead bin or a closet, or under the seats, if storage space is available when the passenger is boarding the plane.

ARRIVE EARLY. These stowage spaces are on a "first-come, first-served" basis, which means you cannot be asked to remove your instrument, or check it as baggage, to accommodate another traveler's bag. (Tip: Use pre-boarding, every time, so that you are sure to have enough overhead bin space.)

IN THE SEAT. Large instruments in a case, such as cellos, may travel in a seat next to you as "seat baggage" or "cargo in the passenger cabin" if the plane is large enough to accommodate. (Some planes used for short flights may be too small to accommodate, so check your planes before booking your flight.) This is an expensive option, since the instrument's seat must be paid for, and it often requires a bulkhead row seat.

CHECK IT. Some professional musicians simply choose to check their instruments in the cargo hold. A high-quality case is mandatory. Some airlines ask for 48 hours advance notice so instruments can be properly accommodated in the hold.

EU REGULATIONS ARE CHANGING, TOO. The European Commission, too, has addressed the issues surrounding traveling with musical instruments and proposed rules very similar to the ones adopted by the FAA.

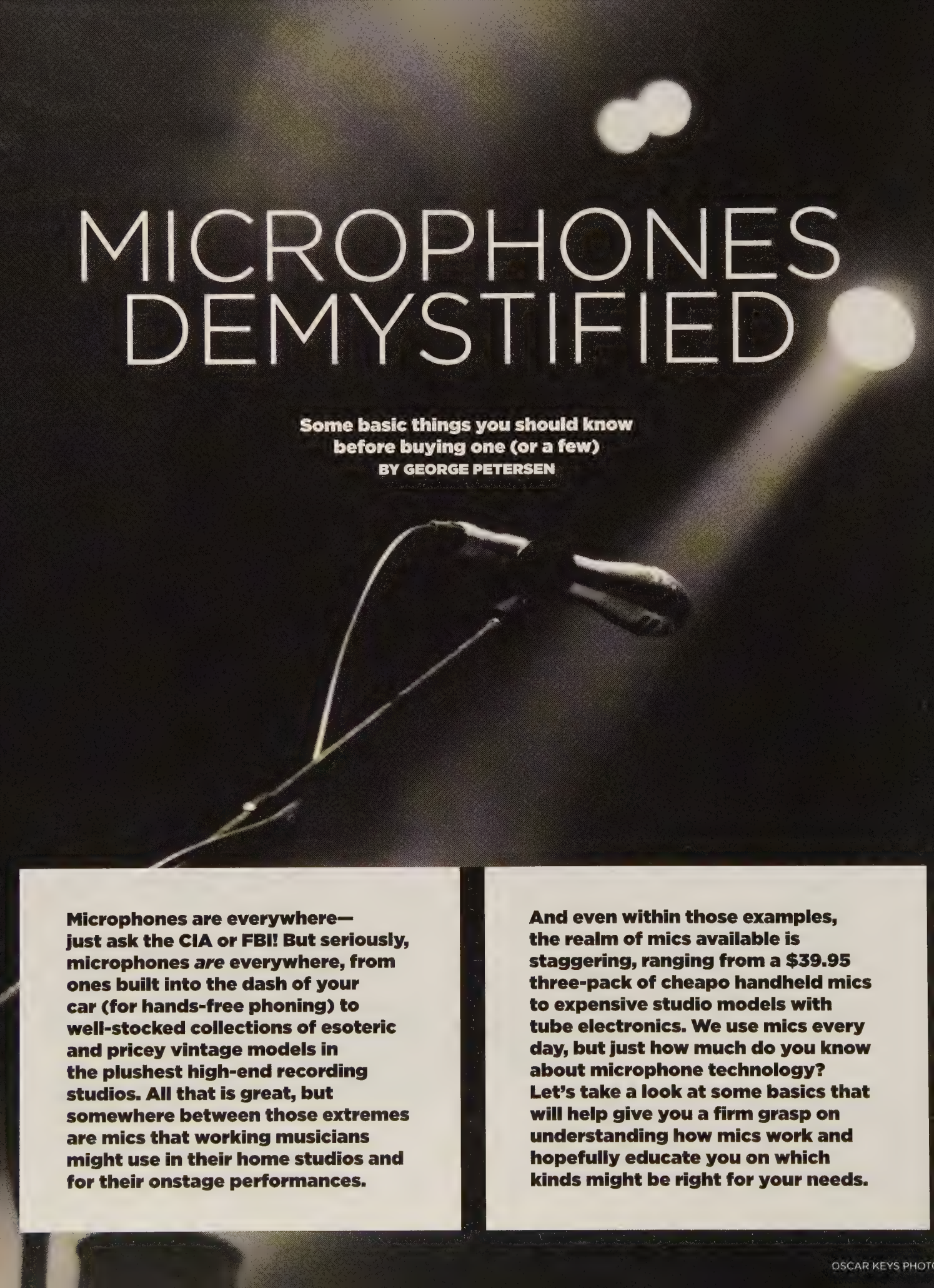
DON'T ASSUME ANYTHING. Whether flying on US carriers or on planes originating in other countries, it's always a good idea to check the airlines' website well in advance of your trip to see whether they have any specific policies regarding instruments that may be different from the new norm, or whether the size of the plane (smaller ones often have less overhead space and may not be able to hold a guitar, for example) might affect whether you can bring your instrument onboard.

For more information about the FAA regulations, visit transportation.gov/airconsumer tips-traveling-musical-instrument

MICROPHONES DEMYSTIFIED

Some basic things you should know before buying one (or a few)

BY GEORGE PETERSEN



Microphones are everywhere—just ask the CIA or FBI! But seriously, microphones *are* everywhere, from ones built into the dash of your car (for hands-free phoning) to well-stocked collections of esoteric and pricey vintage models in the plushest high-end recording studios. All that is great, but somewhere between those extremes are mics that working musicians might use in their home studios and for their onstage performances.

And even within those examples, the realm of mics available is staggering, ranging from a $39.95 three-pack of cheapo handheld mics to expensive studio models with tube electronics. We use mics every day, but just how much do you know about microphone technology? Let's take a look at some basics that will help give you a firm grasp on understanding how mics work and hopefully educate you on which kinds might be right for your needs.

OSCAR KEYS PHOTO

MICROPHONE TYPES

Microphones come in many shapes and sizes, but fall into a couple of basic types.

There are two main categories of microphones used in professional audio: dynamic and condenser. Most common are dynamic microphones, such as the venerable Shure SM58, which is still in production 50 years after its debut in 1966. Dynamic microphones all share a common fundamental design: They operate when sound waves strike a diaphragm attached to a coil of wire. When the coil moves within the magnetic structure of the microphone, it creates an output voltage. (Interestingly, the process is exactly the reverse of the way a speaker operates.) Dynamic microphones are relatively easy to manufacture and tend to be extremely rugged, with a high output level, making them ideal both for studio applications and for the rough world of live performance.

Dynamic microphones are often used on vocals, drums, guitar amps, and brass instruments, and are extremely versatile—sometimes used on just about any source.

One variation of the dynamic approach is the ribbon microphone, which uses a thin ribbon of metal placed between the poles of a magnet. Most ribbon mics are bidirectional, meaning they pick up sounds equally well from either side of the mic. A studio-miking favorite on acoustic guitars, violin, cello, bass, and such, ribbon microphones are occasionally used live, especially placed in front of guitar amplifiers, where the amount of sound entering the mic's rear pickup side is very low compared to that entering the front.

Note that modern ribbon mics, such as those made by Royer Labs, tend to be rugged compared to the classic RCA ribbon mics of yesteryear. However, any ribbon microphone—new or old—can be susceptible to damage from blasts of wind or idiots blowing into the mic, which can permanently deform the delicate and sensitive ribbon element.

ENTER THE CONDENSER

In their simplest form, condenser microphones use an electrically charged, metallized diaphragm, situated very close to a conductive back plate and separated by a thin air layer.

Sound waves striking the thin diaphragm cause a very small voltage change, which is then boosted by a tiny amplifier circuit within the mic body. In vintage or modern designs, certain condenser microphones for studio applications use vacuum tube-based electronics, which can impart a pleasingly warm sound to the output signal. However, in the mid-1960s, solid-state (non-tube) condenser microphones became the norm, as these microphones were available in smaller packages than the bulky tube models.

As power is required by both the microphone capsule and the amplifier, condenser microphones must have a power source, which may be a battery inside the mic body or could be "phantom" power coming from either the mixing console, an outboard preamplifier, or an external power supply. The concept for today's standard 48-volt DC powering used with condenser mics was developed in 1966 by George Neumann, founder of the Neumann company, which made the classic and venerated U47 studio tube mics

JOEY LUSTERMAN PHOTO

GETTIN' TECH-Y WIT IT

IT'S ALL IN THE BALANCE

Unlike a guitar-to-amp run, microphone signals often have to travel over long distances, such as through a multichannel snake cable going from the stage to a PA mixer in the back of a venue. Standard two-conductor guitar cables are limited to lengths of about 15 feet, so as not to pick up large amounts of buzzing and noise from such outside sources as stage lighting and AC electrical cabling.

To accommodate longer cables, mics for professional applications use what is referred to as a balanced line, which employs a three-conductor cable terminating in an XLR (sometimes referred to as a "Cannon") connector. Via a three-pin balanced cable line technology, the mic's signal is wired to pin #2; pin #1 carries the ground (shielding); and pin #3 has a phase-inverted copy of the mic signal.

At the destination end, (mixer, preamplifier, or recorder), the inverted copy of the signal is flipped (phase-reversed) and added to the original. Combining those two inverted components cancels the noise, while the original signal is unaffected. It's a slick trick and is the reason why sound engineers convert 1/4-inch signals to balanced XLR lines, using direct boxes onstage (particularly with basses or acoustic instrument pickups).

GIMME SOME DIRECTION!

DIRECTIONALITY EXPLAINED

All microphones are designed with some kind of directionality in mind. Most common in recording and onstage music work are the "big four" of microphone polar patterns: cardioid, hypercardioid, figure-8, and omnidirectional.

Besides avoiding onstage feedback, the correct use of pickup patterns can be a powerful tool in avoiding sonic "bleed" from nearby instruments or sources in a recording situation.

In the following diagrams, 0 degrees is the sound source (like your voice or guitar), while 180 degrees is the other side of the mic.

Probably the most commonly found variant is the cardioid, so called because of its roughly heart-shaped pattern. Cardioid mics are most sensitive from the front and have a deep nodal area of insensitivity at the rear. The frontal pickup area is typically fairly wide—great for musicians who move around a lot and have trouble staying "on mic." And that area of least sensitivity directly behind the mic reduces the chance of feedback onstage when a stage monitor is directly in front of the performer.

Also popular is the hypercardioid pattern, which exhibits a large rear lobe, and nodes of reduced sensitivity 45 degrees on each side to the rear of the mic. With these mics, stage wedges should be placed off to the side of the performer for best results.

The figure-8 pattern is closely associated with ribbon mics but can also be created by certain multipattern microphones.

The omnidirectional pattern is often used by mics for applications such as stereo classical recording.

CARDIOID

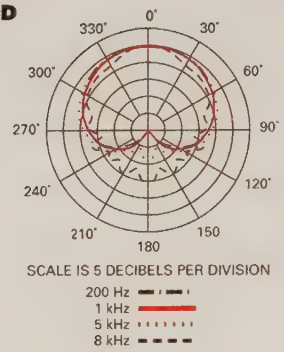
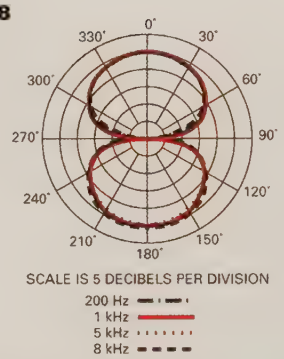


FIGURE-8



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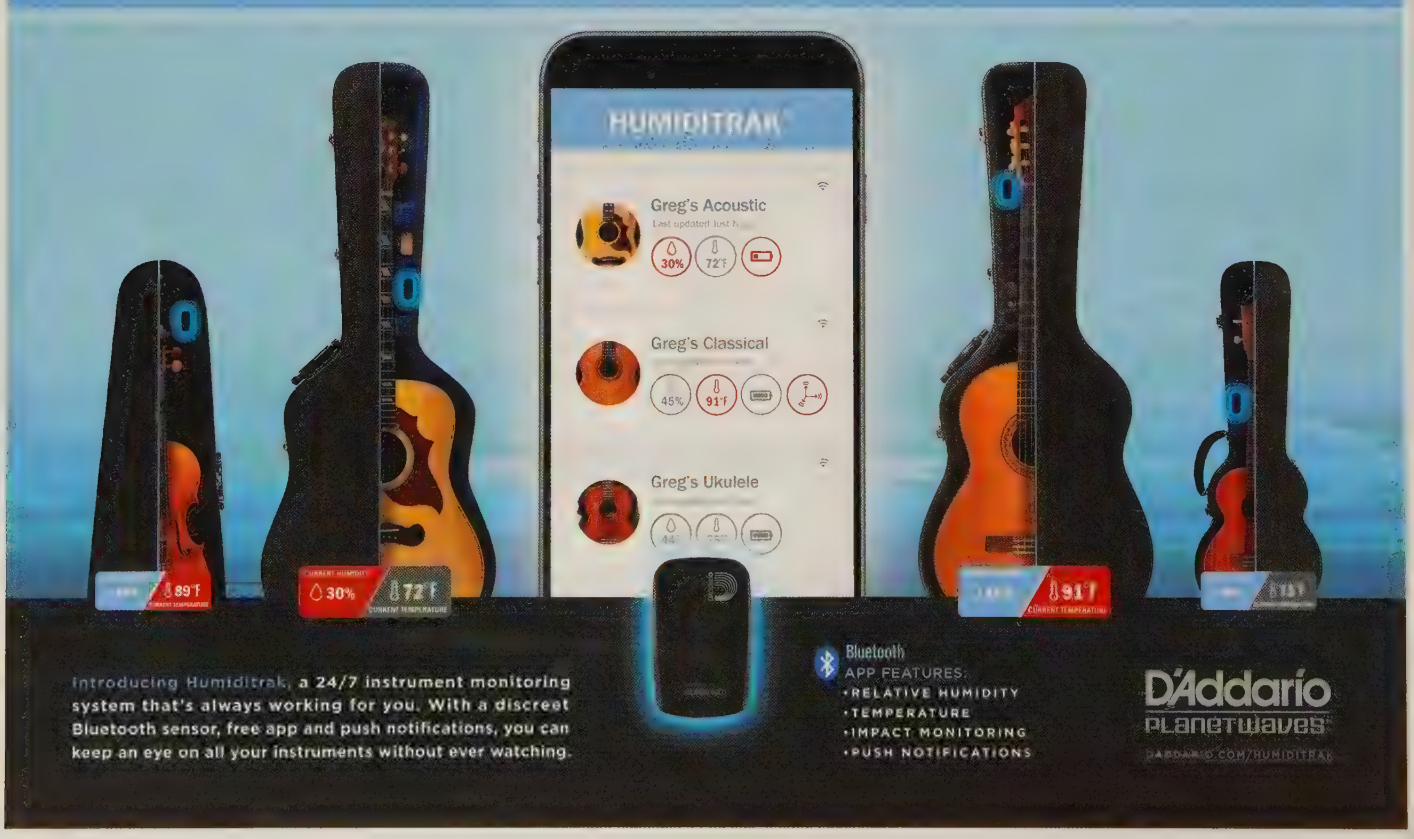

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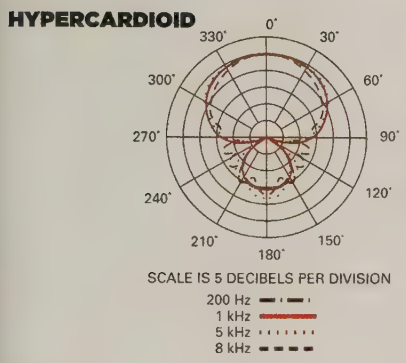
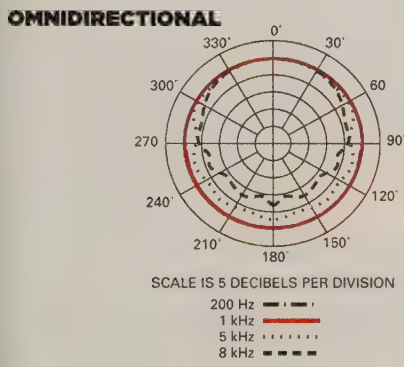




used by Frank Sinatra, the Beatles, and innumerable other top artists. While the development of phantom power proved to be a keystone event in mic evolution and became a world standard, ironically, that same 48VDC phantom source is not sufficient to drive a tube circuit, so tube mics require a separate, outboard power supply.

A variation on the basic condenser microphone is a dual-diaphragm design that essentially puts the equivalent of two mic capsules back to back. By electronically combining different amounts of each capsule, the mic becomes a multipattern model that can be switched to offer the user a choice of pickup patterns, ranging from single-directional cardioid to omnidirectional (equally sensitive to sounds from all directions).

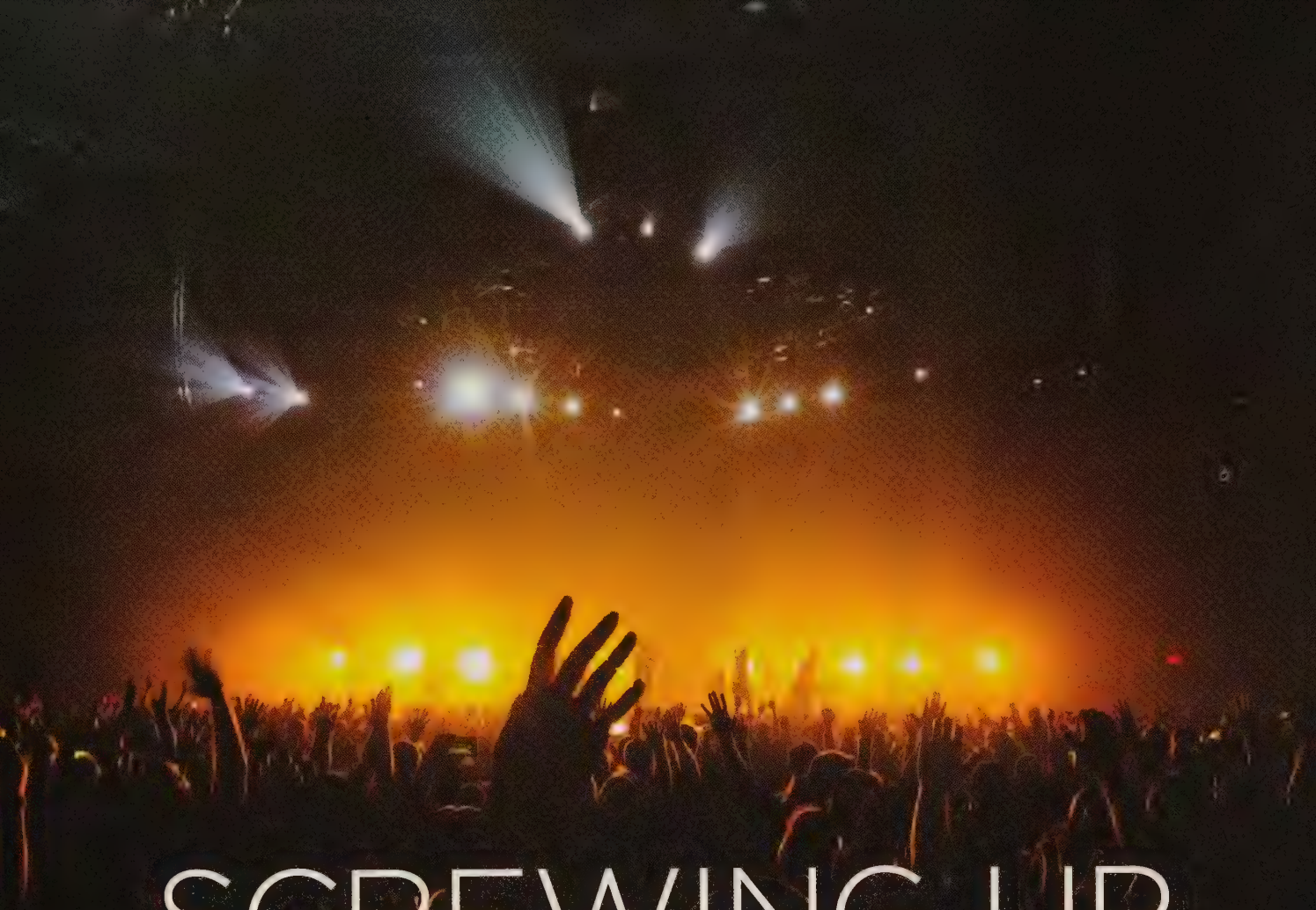
All condenser mics employ extremely thin, low-mass diaphragms, which provide improved high-frequency response and better reproduction of fast transient signals, compared to dynamic mics. There are two variations of condenser mics: models with large-diameter diaphragms (typically in the one-inch range, such as the popular AKG C414), which are most often (but not exclusively) used for vocals; and small-diaphragm models (typically in the half-inch range), which are often a first choice, onstage or in a studio, for acoustic guitar, banjo, mandolin, violin, and other stringed instruments.

Larger-diaphragm mics—dynamic or condenser—tend to have a smooth sound that makes them ideal for horns and vocals, for instance. So, combining the large-diaphragm approach with the lightweight diaphragm of a condenser mic results in a mic that offers that smooth character, yet with far more sonic detail than a dynamic design.

THE WRAP

Hopefully, I've provided you with some insights into microphone technology that you can apply toward mastering your own sound—or at least to win a few bar bets! In any case, we will continue this discussion in the next issue of *Stage & Studio*, where we will examine specific mic techniques used by the pros to capture acoustic instruments of all kinds. Stay tuned!

George Petersen is a recognized authority on audio technology and is the editor of Front of House, *the leading audio magazine for the live sound and touring industry.*



SCREWING UP ONSTAGE!

From wrong notes to getting lost, everyone makes mistakes, but what do you do when that happens?

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

To err is human, and no musician is a stranger to making mistakes. Any player who's put in a good amount of time onstage will most likely have a collection of train wrecks to tell about—moments that resulted in the creation of strategies for being unflappable when things fall apart before an audience.

We asked a cross-section of seasoned musicians to share stories of mistakes they had made onstage and tell us how they recovered, and to offer other pearls of wisdom on the subject. While these artists play in a wide range of styles, they all share a common skill: They've learned to handle mishaps as skillfully as they do playing their instruments, and are able to maintain cool under extreme pressure onstage.

NAINOA SHIZURU PHOTO

JAMIE STILLWAY, A FINGERSTYLE GUITARIST FROM PORTLAND, RESCUES HERSELF FROM "TEMPORARY FRETBOARD AMNESIA":

I've had so many moments of screw-ups, from various amplification snafus, to very wrong notes played loudly, to even playing an entire set without knowing my zipper was down—during a gig where I stood up!

I was recently the featured performer for a monthly guitar society meeting here in Oregon, and went in with a bit of a carefree attitude, as I decided to perform without a set list. As the group seemed very classical guitar-oriented, I thought I'd play my arrangement of [Enrique Granados'] "Danza"—a piece that is a rite of passage for any aspiring classical guitarist. I told the story of how I learned it in high school and fumbled through it at a recital when I was 16. And how I had found the folded-up sheet of music a few years ago, and as I played it again it seemed so different. Musically speaking, it made so much more sense.

After I finished telling the story and introducing the song, I was ready to start the piece, but suddenly had *no* idea how it went. Admittedly, it may not have been the wisest song choice, as I hadn't played through the tune in a while. In my mind I kept thinking, "It's in E minor, starts on the V chord," but as I looked at my left hand, I suddenly had no recognition of how to do that.

Interestingly, this had happened to me before at a gig, and always in the moment right before I was starting a song. My mind would go completely blank, and I'd get what I call TFA—temporary fretboard amnesia. Since I like to have a fairly casual demeanor onstage, I'm often honest and open when I'm in the midst of a screw-up, or suffering through TFA. In this case, I said to myself and the audience, "How does this go?" I played a few wrong notes all in a row, but once I got started it was fine; muscle memory to the rescue!

It seems that some audience members appreciate these moments, and it also appears to make everyone relax. Perfection is fleeting, but as long as you stay in the present moment—which sounds cliché—you can get through any performance screw-up. And I've discovered that you can't let any negative thoughts creep in—otherwise you're doomed!

FRED LONBERG-HOLM, A SELF-DESCRIBED ANTI-CELLIST, COMPOSER, AND IMPROVISER IN CHICAGO, OFFERS SOME FRESH PERSPECTIVES ON MISTAKES:

In a way, I live in the post-mistake world; I let go of mistakes a long time ago. But when I was a kid, I heard that Benny Goodman said that when you make a mistake in your solo, you should just do it again, to make it seem intentional, and that made a big impression on me.

Morton Feldman once said that he became a professional composer when he started writing scores directly in ink, meaning he had no choice but to accept the music he notated. It's kind of like in the '80s film *Pee-wee's Big Adventure*, when Pee-wee Herman falls off his bike, jumps up, and says, "I meant to do that!" I think that Goodman, Feldman, and Pee-wee were all saying the same thing about mistakes.

As an improviser, I think there's no wrong note—just a wrong second note. You're only ever a half-step away from a right note, so a note that will correct a wrong one is always close at hand—kind of like those *appoggiaturas* that Charlie Parker would play...

I was once asked to play a piece by a well-known Chicago bandleader. The music was very difficult to play accurately, with lots of strangely placed events and constantly changing time signatures. At one point, the bandleader looked at the vibes player and said, "Did I write that?" Unlike the rest of us, who were plowing through making mistakes, the vibes player had just given up and was improvising. The point is, sometimes you just have to keep moving forward and doing the best you can in an ensemble setting—and accept the mistakes you're making in doing so.

A BOSTON-BASED CELLIST WHO SPECIALIZES IN NEW MUSIC, RACHEL BARRINGER REMEMBERS AN UNFORTUNATE RECITAL SITUATION:

When I was an undergrad, I was performing the *basso continuo* part on cello with a singer and harpsichordist for the singer's recital. Since I was reading off the score, I somehow lost my place and could not find where we were at all. So I casually stopped playing, kept my poker face, waited about 30 seconds, found my place in the score, and went on. My heart was pounding, my face felt hot, and I was mortified! But it turns out that no one knew except the singer and harpsichordist, and it was not even that bad.

ERIC SKYE, AN ACOUSTIC JAZZ-GUITAR MASTER BASED IN PORTLAND, OREGON, REFLECTS ON HOW ONE MUSICIAN'S DISASTER IS ANOTHER'S BRILLIANT IMPROVISATION:

A few years ago, I was playing at a jazz club here in town with a great bass player and drummer. We were playing "All the Things You Are"—pretty tricky with its modulations, but a tune I've played for years and know very well. It was the last tune before the break, and I happened to know that a lot of serious jazz players and instructors were in town checking us out.

In the middle of my solo, I was getting pretty angular and "out" and somehow I just got totally lost—like falling-off-a-train-in-India lost. It went on like this for four choruses, and it was just so awful trying to get back onboard. Somehow, I was able to get back to the head and out. When it came time for the break, I had to exit by passing through the audience—the ultimate walk of shame. But two different jazz instructors stopped to say things like, "Those are some incredible Lydian dominant ideas you have!" It just goes to show that an outside listener might have a totally different perspective on your music.

CALI ROSE, A LOS ANGELES-AREA SINGER-SONGWRITER AND UKULELE PLAYER, GREETS MISTAKES WITH WARMTH AND GOOD HUMOR:

I screw up onstage all the time! If I don't, then it's like a miracle. We are human after all. And I've been performing for most of my life. When I make a grand flub, I respond with humor because I think if the audience knows you are OK with making a mistake, they rally and support you.

I might say something like, "Well folks, charm rather than perfection... ha, ha, ha." I mean, come on, it may be just a note or two that's a half-step off the mark. Will the earth stop orbiting the sun because I made a mistake?

One of my friends, a renowned jazz pianist, tells me that when she makes a goof onstage, she repeats the same mistake through the rest of the song so the audience thinks it's part of the performance. Besides that, so-called mistakes can lead to unexpected and wonderful discoveries.

But this is *the* story that changed my life as a performer: Years ago I attended a Linda Ronstadt concert. At the time, she was the hot new thing and her music was topping the charts. She and her band had begun playing one of her hits when she waved her arms and stopped the musicians. Mid-song! She leaned into the microphone and let go the "F-bomb," loud enough to hear two counties over. The audience went *crazy*. They cheered and yelled. I was so happy and relieved and inspired to see this artist make a big mistake in front of a big audience, stop the band, articulate her frustration with herself, and begin again.

We all make mistakes, and when a performer cops to this very human happening, it helps the audience, it helps all of us be kinder to ourselves and a little more magnanimous toward the struggle we all have as artists and human beings. **S&S**

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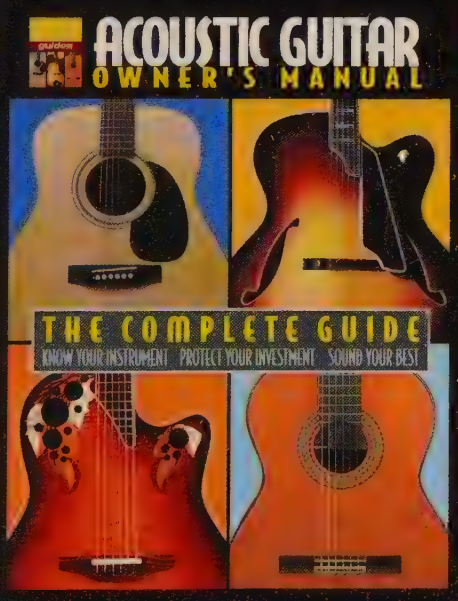

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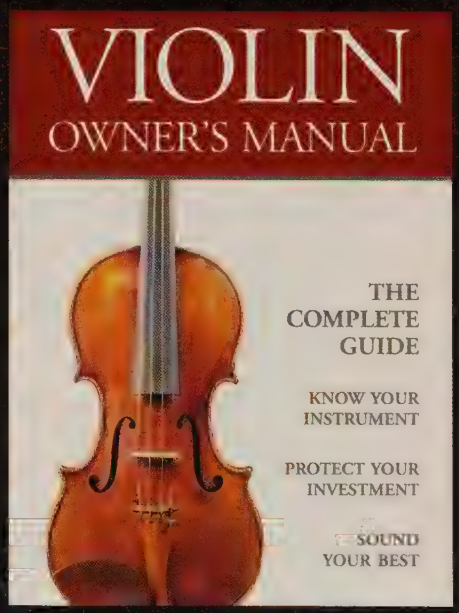

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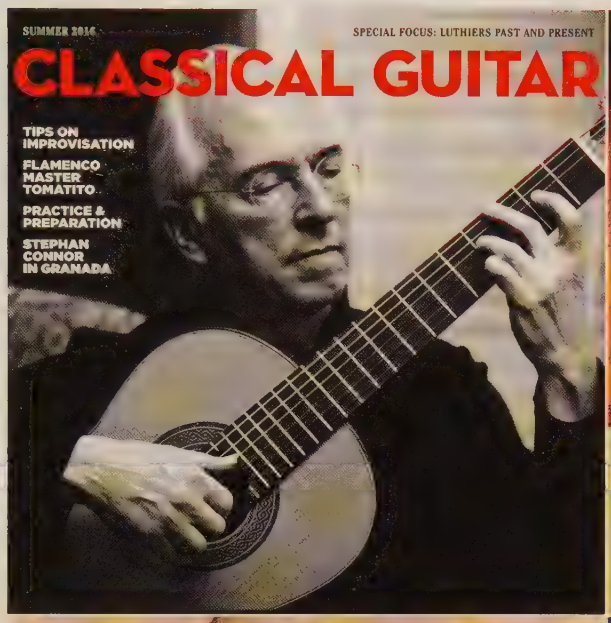

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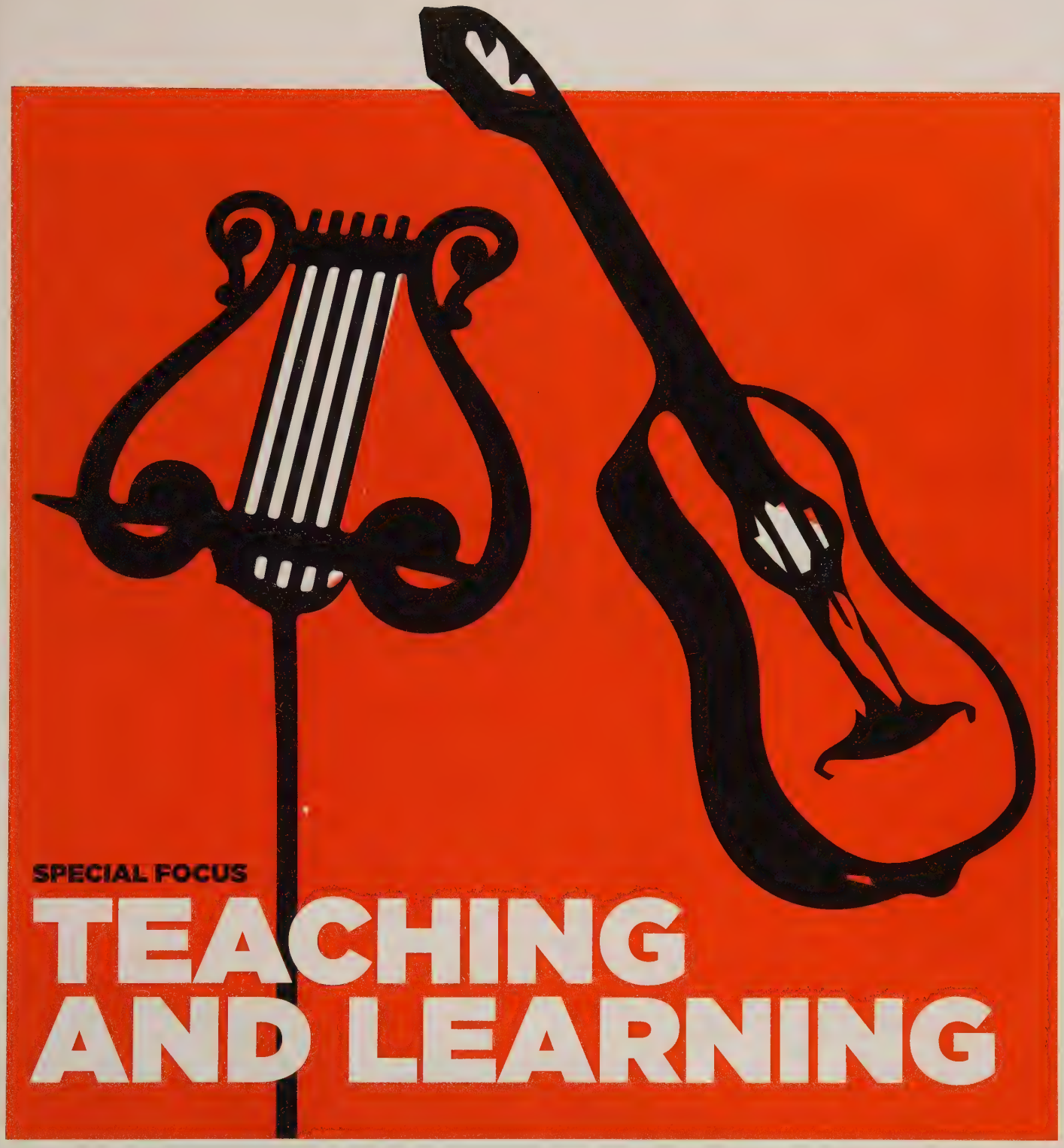

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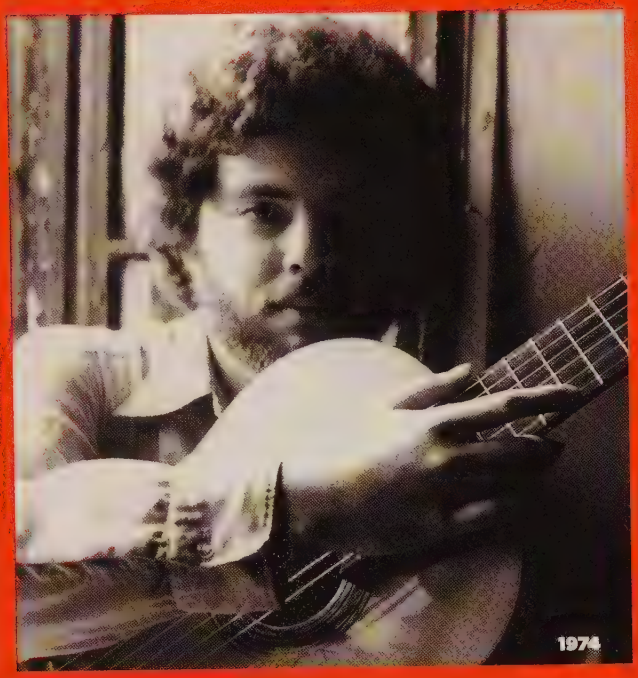
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MANUEL BARRUECO'S SCHOOL DAYS

THE LONG ROAD FROM 'DIFFICULT' STUDENT TO MASTER TEACHER

BY THÉRÈSE WASSILY SABA

The American-Cuban guitarist Manuel Barrueco established an international career at a young age, and not only were his abilities admired and coveted by his guitar colleagues, but the general classical music world was taken by his outstanding musical and technical abilities—the beauty of the sound he produces is something that remains with you after every performance. Barrueco was signed to EMI and made a number of landmark recordings, both solo and with such musical luminaries as Plácido Domingo, Barbara Hendricks, Emmanuel Pahud, and Al Di Meola. Over the course of his more than three-decade international performing career, he has played in top concert halls around the globe, alone and with many of the best orchestras. He is, quite simply, one of the most accomplished and respected guitarists of our time.

Alongside his amazing career as a seemingly tireless traveling musician, he has always taken time to share his knowledge through teaching. He began teaching in 1974 at Manhattan School of Music in New York, and this year he celebrates his 25th anniversary of teaching at the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. Although students travel from all over the world to study with him, he says that he was not the easiest student in his youth. It was this aspect of his life that I focused on in my recent interview with him—his life at Peabody as a student and later as a teacher.

CLASSICAL GUITAR: The Peabody Conservatory has been a part of your life for decades, but what about your musical studies before you arrived at Peabody?

MANUEL BARRUECO: Immediately before Peabody, I went to an arts and music high school in Newark, New Jersey. At that time, they didn't teach the guitar, so the teacher suggested that I play the tuba. When I got hold of the tuba and saw how heavy it was, I changed to the French horn. I played that for a couple of years while I was there—the teacher told me that I had a very good sound. So there I wasn't doing much with the guitar at all.

Before I went to Arts High—in late 1968 or early 1969—I had been studying guitar with Rey de la Torre in New York. It wasn't for long because he soon moved to California. For a Cuban, he was a legend. I had never seen him play and he was making a comeback from a hand injury. When I went to his concert in Town Hall in New York, the Mexican composer Carlos Chávez was there also; I remember meeting him and being very impressed with that.

CG: Was it exciting being at a specialist high school for talented young musicians?

BARRUECO: No, it was actually a very difficult time. When we first came from Cuba, we stayed in Miami, where many Cubans were settling at that time. I was seeing a lot of my family members there again, so that was a really happy time for me, but after less than a year, my family moved up north and settled in Newark, New Jersey. Newark is a city with problems, and of course we didn't have a cent—we were refugees.

CG: And in Miami you had lessons with Cuban guitarist Juan Mercadal.

BARRUECO: Yes, Juan Mercadal was very gifted. He made a recording back in the 1960s and it is really at a high level. If you listen to that recording, you can tell that he was singing. I mean truly singing, because sometimes people talk about singing but it is not really singing, just mannerisms, but he was singing as he played. I remember that he told me—this was back in Miami 1967–68—that I should play a melodic instrument, and I remember he mentioned the trumpet, to develop a more melodic, singing style of playing. But it was not because of that that I learned the French horn.

CG: After the arts and music high school was it a natural step forward to go and study the guitar at Peabody Conservatory?

BARRUECO: That was also a little strange in the sense that I didn't know anything about the schools to study the guitar. I had only heard of one in New York—the Mannes School of Music, which had a well-known guitar department at a time when there were not many at all. The guitar teacher at Mannes was actually a violinist. The career guidance office came up with three schools with guitar departments in the US: Mannes, Boston Conservatory, and Peabody. So I auditioned to them all. But you know, because we were refugees, we didn't know how things worked here, so we made a lot of mistakes.

I had applied to Mannes and to Boston, and Mannes gave me a small scholarship and Boston offered me free tuition. Because of that, I was thinking of not auditioning at Peabody. But I got a phone call from Aaron Shearer at Peabody and he said he wanted to meet me before the audition. Years later I found out it was because my letters of recommendation were good—one of them was from Juan Mercadal and I think the French

horn teacher from high school also had written one. I explained to him what had happened in terms of money and scholarship with the other music schools and that I was thinking of not going to do the audition, and he said to me: "Come and audition."

So I did the audition and he said he wanted me to come to study there. And he said, "If the school doesn't give you a scholarship, I will pay for it myself." I told him that I hadn't been practicing the guitar for over a year and that I didn't know how I was going to feel with the guitar. He said, "Well, it doesn't matter, I want you to come and study here." So I went there.

When I was at Peabody, I had no interest in playing the guitar and I didn't practice and he kept insulting me and sometimes would tell me that I would never amount to anything. I must have been difficult, but some of the things he taught I believed in and I think helped me become whatever it is that I am today.

CG: Despite all your difficulties, you did graduate from Peabody, didn't you?

BARRUECO: Yes, I did graduate. There were problems. Shearer told me there was a time when he was called in because they wanted to expel me from the school because I wasn't doing my work. He told me that he told them, "You can do that if you want but one day you're going to be sorry."

The school was nice to me. In the last year of my course, Shearer threw me out of the class, so I didn't have any more lessons with him for one and a half semesters or so. He was fed up with me. He said: "Don't come to the lessons; I will pass you." When I went to see the dean, I kept explaining to him, "I can't take a path that I don't believe in." I told him that if I ever became a great player, I wouldn't mind giving him credit, but I didn't want to *not* get there, doing something that I didn't believe in, and having to blame him for it.

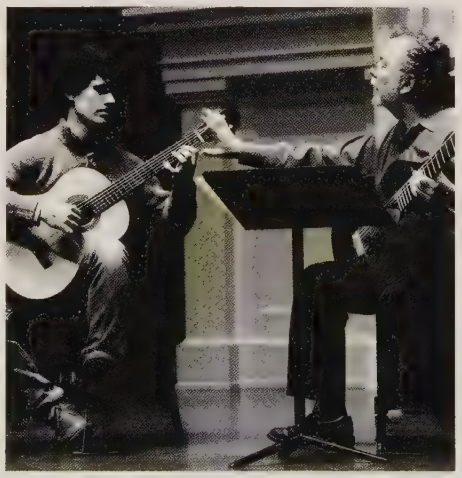
CG: After you graduated, you actually went to teach at Manhattan School of Music, which seemed like an unlikely job for you.

BARRUECO: Well, there was a ping-pong table at [Peabody] and I used to play there a lot. One day, [guitarist/teacher] David Tanenbaum came down and asked me if I wanted to teach in New York—the Manhattan School of Music was opening a guitar department and his father, Elias Tanenbaum, who was a composition teacher there, had been asked who they should hire. David wanted to recommend me as one of the teachers as well as his old teacher, Rolando Blades. They hired me, so that's how it happened.

There were a few years where I started to get really busy and I stopped teaching because I thought it might not be good for my image, but at that time, a violinist, Stanley Bednar, who was head of the strings department there, said to me, "All players should teach." At that time I didn't know what he meant, but I came to realize that you learn from doing it—you learn from teaching and from the students and most importantly, from those who view playing music as an art, and not a business or as show business. Then, if you are going to do as you preach, it keeps you more pure.

CG: So Peabody really has been an important part of your musical life.

BARRUECO: I was also very grateful to Shearer. I would not have been able to go to Peabody and I would not have become the player that I have become if it had not been for him. Musically, the first thing that I learned from Shearer was to try to look at music in an intelligent way. Up to that time, I had been only working intuitively or by imitating things that I had heard before. So musically and technically, he taught me to begin to think—to use my brains and not just to do things blindly or intuitively.



Barrueco with student John Marcel Williams

CG: Did you argue with him more about the mechanical aspects of playing or was it about the musical interpretation?

BARRUECO: Both. The first technical thing was the sound. For example, technically the biggest issue was that I belonged to the school that plays rest stroke wherever possible. I had not developed a really good free stroke, and he believed in free stroke as the stroke of the instrument. I understood the importance of developing my free stroke, but when he showed me the sound he wanted me to get, I said, "I'm not going to play with that sound. That's not going to happen." So I went home and I came back basically with the sound and the position that I have now. He was thrilled with that, so that did not become an issue.

CG: Are you telling me that you went home one day and worked out how to produce that wonderful sound that you have just overnight—just like that?

BARRUECO: Well, I don't know if it was overnight—it could have been. I just remember going home and working on it, trying different positions, and finally thinking, "This is it! This is the sound I want."

CG: Were you looking for a free stroke sound that sounded like you were doing an *apoyando*?

BARRUECO: Yes, basically, that was my goal.

CG: When you are teaching now, what do you do when someone comes in and he or she doesn't have very good tone?

BARRUECO: Your sound is important—if you have a beautiful sound, it is priceless and you need to have it. What I do is make them hear it, to see if I can wake up their ears and make them hear the sound. Some people hear, some people don't and leave with as bad a sound as when they came. But some learn—they hear it and they go

home, like I did, and they work on it. That's very satisfying for me.

CG: Having established a successful career when you were young, has it been it difficult to maintain that high level and stay on top of the game?

BARRUECO: Yes, I think so. It is really important to be self-critical. You can record yourself and listen to it, to see what you don't like in your playing. You have to see how you can fix that, and to find a way so you can keep on improving your playing. You also have to keep on "feeding" your knowledge of music—to be exposed to different music and great playing. I tell my students: "If you want to become a great chef, it's not going to happen if all you eat is McDonalds. You have to try good things and the better the food you try, the greater the chances are that your cooking is going to be better."

And it's the same with being a musician: Listening to great musicians should push you along.

It is also important to be an *honest* player. If you manage to project what you really feel, then I think as you grow and as you age, your playing should develop, as well. Being honest, as a player, means not posturing, but really playing how you feel and what you think.

Many years ago, I ran into the great pianist and fellow teacher at Peabody, Leon Fleisher, in the office of our management in New York. He said, "Well, I have finally learned that my way is not the only way." So I have developed an incredible admiration for what Segovia, Bream, Williams, and Pepe Romero have done.

CG: Do you still practice scales and have a daily technical warm-up routine?

BARRUECO: Actually, I do. It is important to do them because the reason that you got to that level was that you practiced them before, and if you stop practicing them, it will catch up to you.

Also, as I get older, I am going back to basics more, to try to keep an eye on things. It's very easy for the hands to fall into bad habits—not only the hands, but also in the way we prepare. You can forget how to practice well. I think scales and arpeggios are fundamental.

CG: Have you created your own scale systems or do you use someone else's ideas?

BARRUECO: Shearer had these "comprehensive" scales which I think came from a jazz approach. Basically, you go through all the notes of the scale in each position—for example, you could play a C scale beginning with the fifth string with the third finger on the third fret, and play all the notes that fall into that position. Then you can go to the second finger, playing in the second position, then the eighth fret with the fourth finger on the sixth string. That's what I practice. I also do chromatic scales. Those are the two basic patterns I use. For arpeggios, I do an exercise that I learned as a kid from the Pujol method.

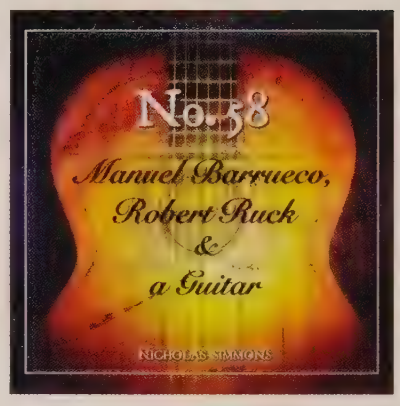
CG: Other daily exercises: slurs, hammers?

BARRUECO: I practice slurs every day or every other day—I'm trying to find the right balance for me. I'm always changing and I am trying to find out what is the right amount because if you practice too much, then your hands are in a constant state of fatigue. That is not how you play your best. So, how much will keep your hands in good shape and also playing well all the time?

CG: This year marks your 25th year of teaching at Peabody. Does it feel like 25 years?

BARRUECO: No, it's pretty amazing—it seems like the other day that I started. At the moment, I have a truly fantastic studio at Peabody. Meng Su, from the Beijing Guitar Duo, has decided to follow an additional solo career and she won the Parkening Competition [in 2015] and is developing fantastically. The most prestigious degree at Peabody is the Artist Diploma program, where the school chooses two to three students across all instruments for the program, and she just got in. The last student I had in the Artist Diploma before Meng was Lukasz Kuropaczewski. Before Meng won the Parkening Competition, my former student Petrit Çeku also won it. That was great. And Junhong Kuang is here. I love working with them all. And yes, it's been 25 years! **CG**

WHAT MANUEL BARRUECO PLAYS



Rare indeed is the classical guitarist who has a gorgeous coffee-table book devoted to him and his main instrument. But that is the case with a just-published volume called *No. 58: Manuel Barrueco, Robert Ruck & a Guitar*, with text and photos by Nicholas Simmons, who passed away during the making of the book.

It's a wonderful volume, with both Barrueco and luthier Ruck telling stories about their lives and careers and, of course, the marvelous guitar. Barrueco recalls in the book: "Sometime in 1972, Tony Arce called me and said, 'There's a guy here in Miami, Bob Ruck, and he's building these incredible instruments. Everybody's getting rid of their guitars and buying his.' It just so happened my sister was driving from Newark [New Jersey] down to Miami with a friend, so they stopped in Baltimore to pick me up…

"I remember distinctly trying #58 and thinking it was the most beautiful-sounding guitar I had ever heard in my life! Such a rich and beautiful sound, and so much power; a huge sound!"

The book includes copious artful color and black & white photographs, and the intersecting stories of Barrueco and Ruck are told masterfully. Highly recommended! It is available from tonarmusic.com

—Blair Jackson

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO START

TAKING UP THE GUITAR AS AN ADULT HAS UNIQUE CHALLENGES—AND OPPORTUNITIES

BY DEREK HASTED

The phone rings; I answer it. The voice on the other end says, "Hello, I've been to your website and I'd like to learn guitar, but I wonder if I've left it too late in life?"

That one question is the clarion cry of many of the inquiries I receive, and it's why I've found myself teaching 39 adult students one-on-one, and precisely zero youngsters at this moment.

Many children come grudgingly to classical lessons because really they want to play electric guitar, or their parents want them to learn to play an instrument that's "not too expensive to buy." Adults, by contrast, are always self-motivated, and their initial enthusiasm is often boundless and matched by their total lack of coordination!

To those of you either struggling to learn guitar as an adult or returning to it later in life—no, you most certainly haven't left it too late to achieve something remarkable.

So, what's different about adult learners? Once you leave college or university, most skills are ones you build on, not new skills you have to learn. But starting to learn to play guitar is not only a new skill for an adult beginner, but a complex one that involves sight, sound, touch, reading, planning, reasoning, timing, and interpretation. But it's also some of the best brain food possible.

Let's address some of the issues many adult learners bring up:

"IT'S TOO HARD."

No, it's not. It's a challenge that needs to be broken into smaller problems. Adults want to run before they can walk, and teaching yourself is not straightforward—how can you find a mistake when you believe you are following the instructions? A skilled teacher can, and will, tailor lessons on a per-student basis to get that sweet spot where effort and achievement are at their best balance.

"I WISH I HAD DONE THIS AS A CHILD."

Motivation is a given, but frustration can eat at even the most promising adult learner. But adults forget that adults learn just as quickly as someone much younger, if only because they have considerable patience and just one subject for their evening homework!

"MY FINGERS ARE TOO STIFF."

Actually, no, they are simply untrained. I can prove this: Any of you out there who can play well know exactly what your two hands have to do, but if you sit your guitar on your lap the other way around and try to fret a chord with your plucking hand, you'll soon find that your fingers just cannot get into position. Adult learners have yet to learn the motor skills players take for granted, but it doesn't take too long to master them.

"WHY?"

This, of course, is the one word that young children throw at adults to question everything that comes their way. Except perhaps in music. Here, it's the adults who want to know why—they need to know how to store the information they've been given, and that means understanding it and filing it away correctly. Whether it's, "Why is that a second finger on that B when it was a third finger in the previous piece?" or, "Why does that piece have both A♭ and G♯ in it?" the learning process is gloriously two-way and constantly veering off-track.

"I'M GETTING FRUSTRATED WITH THE LACK OF PROGRESS."

That really shouldn't happen anymore. The canon of guitar music has changed radically in the last 40 years, and the sheer wealth of appealing, comfortable repertoire is now so large that I struggle to stay on top of it all. Unlike children, adults will have strong preferences on the music that they like, and although it's the duty of a teacher to help them explore new genres, their favorite styles can be a potent way to unlock the barriers to progress. Adults will seldom make as many mistakes in a typical workday as they make in one music lesson, and adults *really* don't like to feel like they are failing. However, picking yourself up, dusting yourself off, and trying to regain your dignity is the only way to make progress, and provided the teacher is sympathetic to the feelings of failure, frustration will soon pass.

"IT'S STILL GOT MISTAKES."

We can blame our performing professional colleagues for this! The classical guitar fights back much harder than most orchestral instruments—with two hands to make one note, with polyphony, with the problem of not even knowing which finger frets the bottom note of a chord until everything is decoded, with the need to position eight fingers to an accuracy of a few millimeters, the chance of making a mistake is high. In addition, learners forget that the guitar they hear on the radio and most recordings is not how a guitar sounds while it is being learned. Indeed, a quick trawl of YouTube will show you the differences when players of different levels of expertise perform a piece. You might aspire to play like the best, but it can be discouraging to constantly measure yourself against the best. Keep your expectations reasonable.

"I'M BORED WITH IT."

Adults are (largely) sociable beings who like company, and guitar can seem like an insular hobby. Except that guitar ensembles are a great way to enjoy mutual encouragement, a big sound, lots of laughter, and a chance to realize that ultimately, playing guitar is about what you hear, not about what you read and do. Guitar isn't a lonely hobby when you can find like-minded players!

"WHEN DO I FINALLY GET TO THE END OF MY LEARNING?"

Well, we all know the answer to that: There is an astonishingly large amount of high-quality guitar music out there, and virtually every piece brings its own challenges. As your experience of guitar music in general, and music construction in particular, starts to grow, a large percentage of repertoire can start to look vaguely familiar, because the set of universal building blocks in guitar music is surprisingly large. But there's *always* something new and exciting to work at overcoming.

"WHAT ABOUT MUSIC THEORY?"

I suspect some of us who learned music theory as children will instinctively recoil at that question, because music theory can contain a whole raft of concepts that aren't relevant to classical guitar. But there *are* many aspects of theory that adults, used to finding patterns in chaos, will find helpful to their sight-reading and analysis. Being shown examples of theory in action is something that many adults find helps cement a new piece or a new fact into place much more rapidly.

"I DIDN'T PRACTICE MUCH THIS WEEK."

Children already have so many routines and regimens in their education lives that fitting in music practice is usually a little easier for them than it is for adults, who may have elderly parents, cars to get to the shop, grocery shopping to do, a boss who makes them work late at the office, and so on.

But guitar isn't a race to a destination, it's a journey, and the scenery is all along the journey, not just at the destination! A good teacher will be able to change the lesson on-the-fly to take account of a student's achievement, and the student/teacher relationship is always a rich and varied one when teaching adults. And just like a real journey, there will be places where the desire to stop and admire that particular piece of scenery just can't be resisted. **CG**

HOW TO RUN A GUITAR STUDIO

THERE'S MORE TO BEING A GOOD TEACHER THAN BEING A GOOD PLAYER

BY PAULINE FRANCE

Being a gifted guitarist doesn't automatically make you a gifted teacher. So how do you know if you are teacher material? If you've ever considered teaching guitar, there are important questions you must ask yourself, like "How much should I charge" or "Should I set up as my own business?"

Teaching is an art in itself, as is mastering an instrument and running a successful business. So we talked to a handful of accomplished guitar teachers and business owners to learn the ins and outs—and the business—of teaching guitar.

YOU CAN PLAY, BUT CAN YOU TEACH?

Dr. Jorge Pastrana, classical guitarist and guitar professor at Southwestern College in Chula Vista, California, recommends achieving the highest levels of musicianship before embarking on a teaching career. "I strongly believe that in order to teach effectively, one must become a well-rounded musician first," he says. "Possessing good skills or talent in order to play guitar is a very important aspect, but even greater is to pursue great musicianship skills."

Add patience and the ability to clearly relay information, and you'll be on the right track.

"It's important for a teacher to be able to clearly articulate and explain concepts to students," Pastrana says. "A teacher must be patient in order to share knowledge and expertise with people of different levels and proficiency."

A good way to find out if you have the traits of a good teacher is to do a test run with a friend. After a few weeks of consistent lessons, you will learn a lot about yourself when it comes to patience and temperament.

WHAT TO TEACH AND FOR HOW LONG

While you must adapt to each student's needs, several fundamentals should be part of your classical guitar curriculum to ensure a well-rounded course.

Classical guitarist Colin McAllister, who teaches at the University of Colorado, takes a flexible approach as he imparts classical guitar essentials to students with varying skills and goals. "I have all kinds of different students at different levels who have different goals," he says. "I teach every student a little bit differently, but there *is* a certain set of etudes and technique exercise books that everybody is going get at some point."

McAllister's essentials include *Solo Guitar Playing, Volume 1* by Frederick Noad, *Twenty Studies for the Guitar (Andres Segovia Edition)* by Fernando Sor, *25 Estudios* by Matteo Carcassi, *Estudios Sencillos* by Leo

Brouwer, *Kitharlogus* by Ricardo Iznaola, and *Pumping Nylon* by Scott Tennant.

Classical guitarist Dr. Kim Perlak, assistant guitar chair at Boston's Berklee College of Music, notes that versatility is invaluable when teaching students with wide-ranging interests. "Classical players are looking for immersion in the authenticities of style," she says. "Songwriters, jazz, fingerstyle, blues, rock, and funk players are often looking for aspects of technique, phrasing, tone, and compositional approach that they can apply to their own style. All students are trying to balance stylistic authenticity with their personal authenticity, and I do my best to guide them." As for class length, most teachers agree that standard lesson time should be half an hour to an hour—the former when teaching children age 12 or younger. "For kids, 30-minute lessons work well because their attention span isn't longer than that," McAllister says.

HOW MUCH TO CHARGE

Determining the value of what you do encompasses knowing what other instructors in your area charge, how many students you'll teach, and other considerations.

"You have to realistically gauge how much people are charging in your area, and you need to decide where your ability is within that," McAllister says. "You need to decide how many students you want, because if you charge more, you'll probably have fewer students. If you want more students, you may need to lower your price to make it more accessible."

Steve Langemo, a guitar instructor and studio owner in Colorado Springs, Colorado, has established a successful business by offering a wide range of discounts and free trial-runs that let prospective students see the studio, meet an instructor, and take a sample lesson before committing. Effective incentives include discounts for family, military, and monthly pre-payment.

"On one hand, you have to look at teaching as an art, but on the other hand, it's a business," Langemo says. "When I'm teaching, all I care about is my students' progress, but you also have to think about it as business owner. You want to run a great studio and you want to make a good living, so you have to balance those out."

"I've taught weekly lessons to the same students for the past seven years," Langemo adds. "If people are on vacation or are sick, I don't charge them. It's simple economics. I'd rather stay flexible than constantly look for new students."

Guitar teacher Eric Branner, who runs Blackforrest Music School in Seattle, Washington, and is CEO and co-founder of Fons, a web- and mobile-based application for private instructors, advises, "Establish a clear written agreement with students regarding lesson payment and cancellation policies. Many teachers have a 24-hour cancelation policy, and will often reschedule at no extra cost if it works within the teacher's schedule."

'On one hand, you have to look at teaching as an art, but on the other hand, it's a business. You want to run a great studio and you want to make a good living, so you have to balance those out.'

—STEVE LANGEMO

MARKETING YOUR STUDIO

You can do many things to stand out in a competitive field, but Branner says that one element tops everything: word-of-mouth. "When people want to learn how to play guitar, they usually ask someone they already know. When we started out, we had a handful of students, and most of the students we have now have a connection to our very first students. So if it's a long-term goal for you to be a professional music teacher, word-of-mouth is going to be your best friend." Other things Branner recommends include creating a good website, hosting open-mic events, performing locally, and generally being involved in the community.

London-based guitarist Marco Cirillo has an effective online approach involving advertising on Gumtree, a free UK classified ad site that is much like the popular Craigslist in the United States. "I also know about search engine optimization and have been using it to rank higher in Google," he adds. "I might consider advertising on Facebook, too."

LAUNCHING YOUR BUSINESS

For tax and legal reasons, you'll want to organize and register your educational efforts as a legitimate business.

Jocelyn Celaya, also known as Radical Classical, is a San Diego-based classical guitarist and mentor for small business owners through SCORE, a nonprofit organization that provides free business mentoring services to entrepreneurs in the United States. She says, "The first basic step to take when starting a small business is to choose a name. If the name of your business is unique, then you should file for a fictitious business name at your county office. When you are finished with that process, apply for a business license at your city office and you'll become a sole-proprietorship company. People can find a lot of resources through SCORE's website [score.org]."

Further, it's important to consult an accountant or attorney to get professional financial and legal assessments—all to make sure you're properly following all the necessary steps and requirements.

THE BOTTOM LINE

As you teach, it's important to remind yourself that you're educating and influencing the classical guitarists of tomorrow. "Hand in hand with playing, teaching is the way we leave a legacy and push our art of guitar-playing forward," Dr. Perlak notes. "Teaching requires the same deep commitment as playing."

For any instructor, those can be words of wisdom to live and work by. The rewards can be wonderfully fulfilling—especially since your next student may be the next Isbin or Segovia. **CG**

DESERT SERENADE

ACCLAIMED ARIZONA CLASSICAL GUITAR PROGRAM TAPS INTO A CITY'S LATIN ROOTS AND BRINGS OUT THE STARS

BY KAREN PETERSON

JERRY ROSEN PHOTO

Within a month of joining the newly formed, but already promising, guitar program at the University of Arizona Tucson, R. Thomas "Tom" Patterson found himself at its helm. In a tragic twist, the program's 28-year-old founder, Norman Douglas Sholin, a classical guitarist from this mountain-embraced desert city, who had studied in Spain with Emilio Pujol, was killed in an airplane crash.

"My philosophy is that crises are opportunities and that negative events can be turned into something positive," says Patterson, adding, with pause, "but the death of a child . . ." In response, Patterson suggested to Sholin's parents that the guitar program sponsor an annual competition in their son's name.

Thirty-six years later, the Sholin Guitar Competition is the heart beating in the background of the internationally acclaimed program that Patterson has built atop the foundation Sholin laid, and one of five competitions that the classical guitar program—renamed Bolton Guitar Studies in 2012—sponsors each year. All are named in honor of late Tucson supporters of the guitar program, with one exception: the two-year-old David Russell Bach Prize.

While guitarist Russell, Patterson's close friend and a Bolton artist-in-residence, is very much alive, the Bach competition, like the others, has an over-riding purpose. It is not just about the prize money and generous supply of strings from D'Addario, or, in two instances, the unprecedented opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to win concert guitars worth thousands of dollars, specially crafted by luthiers Stephan Connor and Tucson's Jeremy S. Cooper. The competitions are foremost about legacy.

"Years from now, I want students to remember what David Russell meant to the guitar program. We're bringing people back—it's like a 'saint day'—to be celebrated," says Patterson, professor and chair of, as he describes, "the most heavily endowed guitar program in the world," an honor made possible through the munificence of the late Sanford (Sandy) and Phyllis Bolton.

Tom Patterson and student

UA NEWS PHOTO

Entranced by both the music and the maestro, the Tucson couple, both of whom died within months of each other in 2011, bequeathed a total of $3.1 million to ensure that the legacy of Patterson's program lives on. And because the Boltons were deeply fond of Russell and his wife, María Jesús, the endowment also ensures that his artist-in-residence continues.

A CENTER FOR GUITAR IN THE 'OLD PUEBLO'

Although Patterson unexpectedly found himself heading the program—now part of the university's Fred Fox School of Music—he already understood when he arrived from Western Washington University that there was something special about Tucson. Seventy miles from the border with Mexico, the "Old Pueblo," as the city has long been known, has deep and vibrant Latin roots, culturally and musically.

"I thought there was an opportunity to make it a national center for the guitar," says Patterson. "The Latin American culture is already here, and the guitar is the symbol of Latin American music." Patterson, who still performs as a classical guitarist, has a strong background in Latin and Brazilian music—he studied at Museu Villa-Lobos in Rio de Janeiro (dedicated to the memory of Brazil's iconic composer Heitor Villa-Lobos), as well as with South American virtuosos Abel Carlevaro and Antonio Lauro, among others. "I'm presenting the symbol of Latin music on a platter."

From the outset, the Bolton school has been deeply involved with the local community, emphasizing playing music outside the classroom in a wide variety of settings, which benefits both the students and a city that has learned to love classical-guitar music. From the competitions to weekly recitals and master classes on campus (visitors welcome), to countless appearances at a variety of public events and venues—including a guitar competition coinciding with Tucson's International Flamenco Festival, and Sunday concerts that regularly draw 150 to 200 people at a popular botanical garden—the community performance outreach is seemingly endless, to the delight of students like Ivar Fojas.

A Fulbright scholar from the Philippines nearing the end of his doctoral studies, Fojas asks, rhetorically, "Do you know how valuable that is, to play in front of an audience?"

In a part of the country where mining is a big industry, Patterson likens performance to smelting (he's also fond of sports analogies): "Students are under the pressure and heat of public performance, and out come the impurities. It's a real trial by fire."

Plus, he's discovered that the deadline of a competition gets students' attention. "It sharpens their game," says Patterson. "The things I say become more meaningful, makes lessons more meaningful. All the things we do to prepare have an urgent quality."

WHEN THE CLASSICAL STARS COME OUT

Certainly, few other classical guitar programs can boast the kind of overwhelming community response and support—financial and personal—that Patterson and his students have received over the years from growing numbers of Tucson residents, evident not only by audience size, but also by the list of donors that fills page after page of concert programs.

"They see excellence right in front of them," says Patterson, whose emphasis on getting his students—and their guitars—out into the community is how the Boltons originally discovered him.

"Tom has attracted a lot of people who have fallen in love with what he does," says Julia Pernet, chairwoman of the Tucson Guitar Society. "He creates an environment where things happen."

The same can be said of Pernet, whose leadership has helped propel the Tucson Guitar Society into the national spotlight. While not specific to classical guitar, the Guitar Society and Bolton closely cooperate on events, none more star-studded than the Tucson Guitar Festival in November. Now entering its eighth year, headliners at the festival regularly include Sergio and Odair Assad, who also spend the week conducting master classes at Bolton.

Supported in part by the D'Addario Foundation, the Tucson Guitar Festival hosts Bolton's Thomas H. Beeston Memorial Guitar Competition, in honor of the late luthier, Bolton advisor, and classical guitar teacher. Four finalists compete in the Beeston for $15,000 in prizes, the Connor guitar notable among them.

Says luthier Stephan Connor, who be-

gan making guitars for the competition four years ago, "I'm thrilled to collaborate with Tom and be a part of his remarkable guitar scene. The positive, beautiful vibe in their community has been inspiring to me, and building for such lovely people has brought my guitars to the next level."

Sergio Assad, who knew the Boltons and composed "Sandy's Portrait" (2012) in Sandy Bolton's honor, is also quick to praise both Patterson and his students. "There are just a few schools in the country with the same kind of high-quality students," says Assad, who is on the faculty of San Francisco Conservatory of Music. "Tom Patterson knows how to organize a constant flow of interest in the guitar program, motivating people from the community to participate in the whole process of helping students increase their confidence."

Equally effusive is Russell, who arrives each March for a week of master classes and the Bach competition. "Tucson has become an important center for guitar because of Tom's energy," he says. "Tom knows how to inspire people to do things. He has made me and the Assad brothers feel a part of the university and a part of the lives of these students."

MANY HATS, MANY HANDS

Patterson says his role at Bolton takes on many forms, including "stern father," when needed, or comforting mother. He's also in charge of the family budget, carefully managing the endowment so that the money is earmarked in ways that helps the greatest number of students, rather than supporting one or two full scholarships. (Patterson's guitar competitions also honor finalists, not just winners, with prize money.)

And while his role doesn't extend to students' health and wellness, he cares enough about it to add a nutritionist to the program (see *Stage & Studio* article "Add 'Wellness' to Your Repertoire" in this issue).

As for his contribution to the success of the guitar program, Patterson claims "industriousness and dumb luck," backed up by the serendipity of meeting the Boltons and the Guitar Society's Pernet and its members, who have provided the Bolton family with a full complement of metaphorical uncles and aunts.

Generous with its purse strings, the Tucson community has also jumped in to

David Russell in the classroom

'The positive, beautiful vibe in their community has been inspiring to me, and building for such lovely people has brought my guitars to the next level.'

—STEPHAN CONNOR

help the young men and women under Patterson's tutelage, most of whom hail from outside the United States. This past semester, the mix at the graduate level included two students each from Chile, Mexico, and China (where, says Patterson, "the guitar is really big") and one each from Argentina, Puerto Rico, and Canada.

"My students are getting a great impression of America," Patterson says of the outpouring of support that ranges from planning receptions after concerts and recitals to helping students find housing, even guitars. While there is a chance to win one of the two competition guitars, students have an even a greater chance that someone will lend them a concert-worthy instrument.

"We all do what we can; Tom makes it fun," says Chancey Pelletier, a Baroque guitarist who has known Patterson for nearly 20 years. Pelletier has opened her home to a stream of his students, not to teach—"Tom does that," she says—but to listen and give encouragement.

Marilyn Chase has spent the past four years doing the same, opening her home and also attending nearly every recital and performance, a consistency of support that hasn't gone unnoticed. Prior to this year's Bach competition, students celebrated Chase's birthday with a surprise performance at her home, dubbing it a "Bach & BBQ."

The friendships formed work both ways. Widowed five years ago, Chase says, "Those kids saved my life," a comment that underscores what Patterson already knows— that his students are as special as the program's supporters in Tucson.

Walking with a music school colleague to graduation ceremonies this past May, Patterson says they spied Chase with a few of his students. His colleague turned to him and asked, "Does Bolton also teach social interaction? Your people are always so incredibly nice."

Like a proud papa, Patterson sent out a note to his students, telling them the story and adding a personal postscript, "That was the highest compliment I've received in a long time." **CG**

GUITAR TEACHING THEN AND NOW

THE BASICS HAVEN'T CHANGED MUCH IN FIVE CENTURIES

BY GRAHAM WADE

When you are struggling to instruct pupils in the principles of beauty, interpretation, musicianship, and the mechanics of technique, it may be comforting to reflect on the history of fretted-instrument teaching traditions. For centuries lutenists, *vihuelistas*, guitarists, and other musicians have wrestled with the mysteries of pedagogy. They all boil down to a very straightforward question: "How do I help these students fulfil their musical potential?"

Behind this question are a number of considerations that vary according to the historical and geographical context of teacher and pupil. The object of music teaching is to enable the learner to perform a particular type of music appropriate to the teacher's knowledge and the pupil's eagerness to play such repertoire. The course of instruction will depend on the particular instrument and the techniques employed to play that instrument. And each specific instrument is, of course, associated with its own repertoire.

The teacher embodies and supplies that repertoire, and we have available a quantity of tutor books written through the ages that provide such repertoire and explain how it should be performed. Take for example Luis Milán's *El Maestro*, published in Valencia, Spain, around 1535—an ideal book for studying the vihuela, a six-course variant of the modern guitar.

Milán introduces his publication as "following the same manner and order a teacher would follow with a beginning student, showing, in an orderly way from the beginning, everything the pupil may be ignorant of so as to understand the work, and providing music suitable for the hands at each stage of development." Milán explains the principles of measure and beat, how to tune the instrument, the type of notation (in this case tablature), the eight tones (or scale patterns), and this leads on to the collection of pieces to be played. The book is divided into two volumes, the first being for beginners. The author explains that the student must begin with easy material at first, and "will have to be content with what is being taught." Later he adds, "Most things are truly easy for a person to grasp if not made difficult by the pupil not wishing to learn them."

Milán's logic cannot be faulted. Start progressively, put things in the right order, and rely on the cooperation of the pupil. Naturally, discipline in the 16th century was more Draconian in schools and music lessons than our 21st-century child-centered approach. But, the same basic concepts apply to all successful teaching.

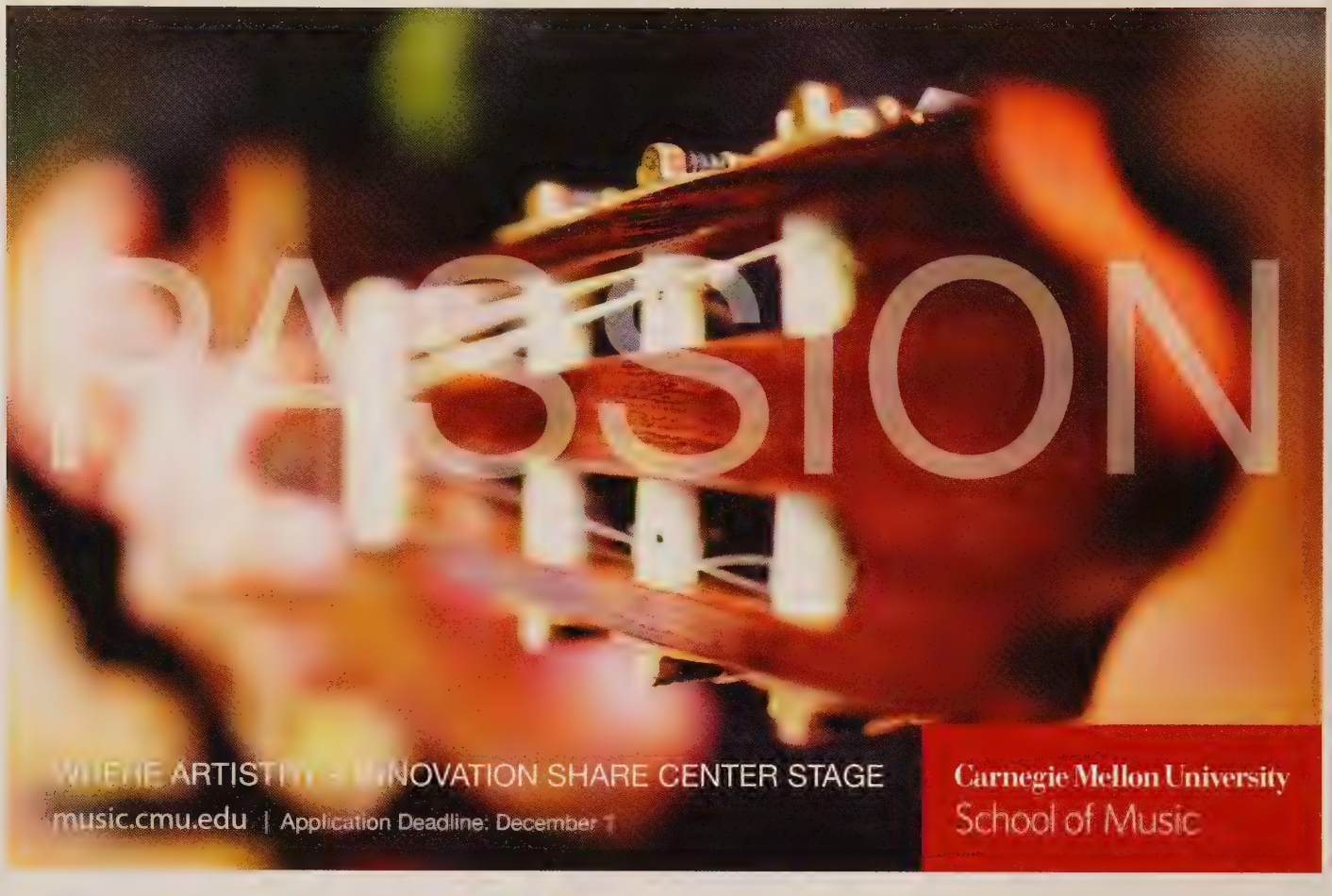
In 1610, 75 years after Milán, Robert Dowland's *Varietie of Lute Lessons* was published in London. The book is an anthology of music for lute gathered from European musicians, with some introductory observations by John Baptisto Besardo. Dowland suggests that the "wholly raw" beginner can achieve the art of playing if the person has "that natural desire towards music," works hard, and has patience. The pupil is to choose a lute that fits the hand, being neither too small nor too large; to practice pieces in sections, staying on any point as long as it takes ("though thou play it over a thousand times"); to tackle easier pieces at the start; and to memorize compositions where possible. The left hand is regarded as "the mother of the melody," while the right hand "doth unfold the melody conceived and so sounds it to our ears."

Though every teacher in any epoch has problems, presumably neither Milán nor Dowland had to confront the allure of a powerfully disseminated popular music. For many years now, classical guitar teachers have competed with a strongly seductive counter-culture—classical guitar often appears less attractive to beginner pupils than the delights of the electric guitar. The Apollonian restraint of the classical guitar, with its seated position, its lack of movement, its quiet voice, and its inherent discipline, may come over as dull compared with the Dionysian frenzy of rock stars with their flashy garments, incessant movement, volume, and sometimes extreme lifestyles.

Generally speaking, violin and cello teachers do not have the same problem identifying the nature of the music their students wish to learn. Their instruments are the mainstay of European classical music. But to the uninitiated a guitar can be an ambiguous symbol. Guitars are different in appearance depending on the music they are intended for. Techniques vary accordingly from classical to folk, country, flamenco, blues, rock, and jazz guitar. The beginner can become confused in a labyrinth of fingerpicking, flatpicking, fingernail culture, and just plain strumming. Also, once a player has embarked on learning one style, changing to something else can be a tortuous journey.

How classical guitar teachers solve these problems depends on the individual tutor. Many bend with the wind and compromise their beliefs. Others have no quarrels or qualms about the raucous world of rock and positively enjoy listening to it. As a classical purist, I was fortunate to spend my best career years in a college context where professional colleagues were hired to teach other styles of guitar. If a student did not enjoy a classical diet, there was a different musical menu available around the corner.

What comes out of this is that *all* styles of guitar have to be taught expertly. The best teachers are those with heart and soul invested in the kind of music they love primarily. Milán and Dowland positively overflow with enthusiasm and ecstasy for their art. After five centuries, we can all learn something from that. **CG**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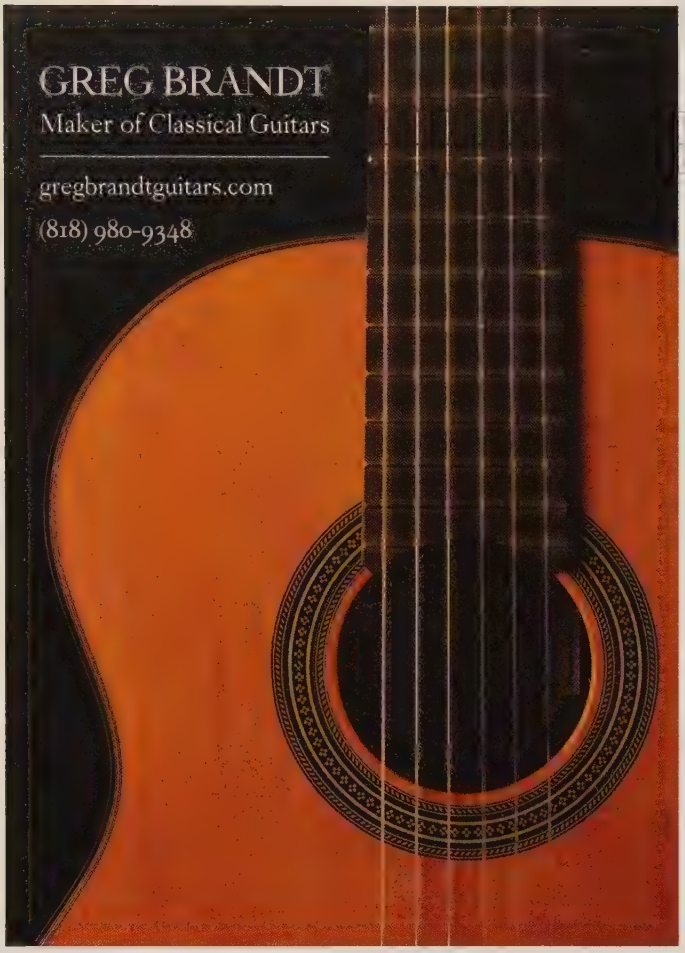

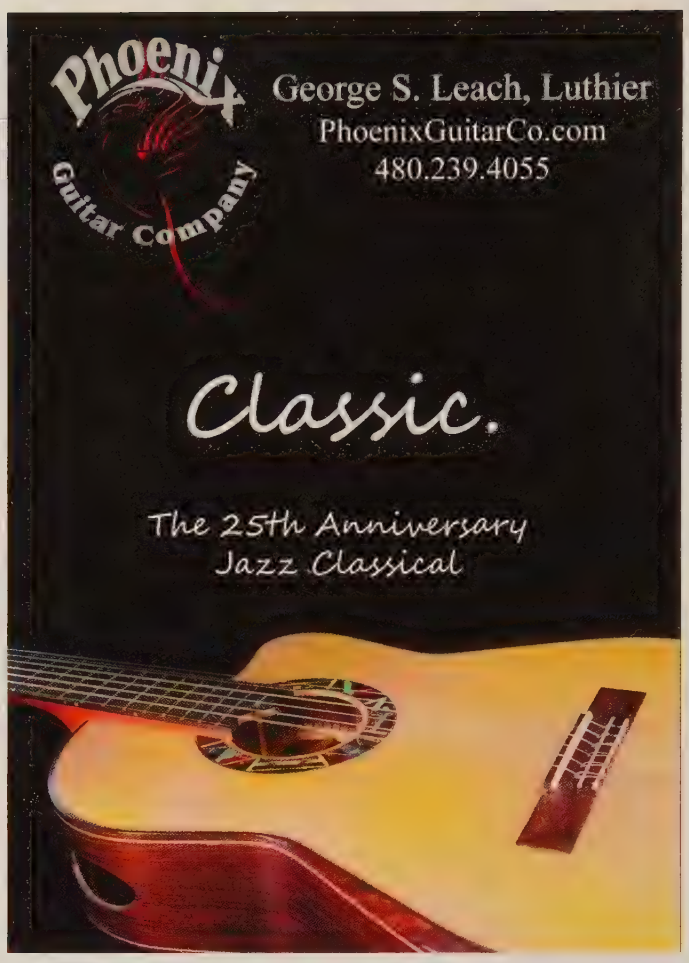

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Steve Marsh

'CIRCLE'S END'

A "relaxed" and "dreamy" piece from Steve Marsh

Welcome to the inaugural selection for *Classical Guitar*'s new "Music to Play" feature — a charming, melodic solo piece called *Circle's End* by guitarist, composer, teacher, and longtime *CG* contributor Steve Marsh. "*Circle's End* was written in late July 1981, about a week after I heard the news that American singer/songwriter Harry Chapin had died in a traffic accident," Marsh says. "I was, and still am, a huge fan of Harry Chapin—to my mind he wrote some of the finest songs of the 20th century. His song 'Circle' was one of the songs I had been listening to when I heard the news of his death; hence the title of this composition."

A native and current resident of picturesque Derbyshire county in the East Midlands of England, Marsh started writing for guitar in the early '80s. To date he has written over 300 pieces (for solo guitar, two, three and more guitars, and guitars in combination with various instruments, etc.), with many published internationally and performed and recorded by several guitarists. Since 2000, he has operated Lathkill Music Publishers, which has put out books by many guitarists, but also works for orchestra and string quartet, among others. He runs a successful guitar studio at his home in Bakewell, Derbyshire, where he lives with his wife Nadia (with whom he also plays music regularly).

You can learn more about Marsh and his music at his website: stevemarsh.uk.com.

CIRCLE'S END PERFORMANCE NOTES FROM STEVE MARSH

- The first two bars should be played very quiet, to serve as an introduction to the next four bars, which themselves are the introduction proper. Bars 5 and 6 echo the previous two bars, so should be played accordingly.
- When the first melodic phrase enters at bar 7, the upper melody should be projected over the accompanying arpeggio, which should be played quietly in the background. I perform these melody notes with a slight apoyando stroke (rest stroke). Bars 9 and 10 act as a link to the next phrase and the accents in bar 10 should be forced out a little to obtain a 1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2 rhythm.
- The awkward transition from the final F♯ in bar 17 to the B minor chord in bar 18 can be made slightly easier by removing the 7th fret barre towards the end of the bar and replacing finger 1 on the F♯ by finger 2 and then sliding down along the string to fret three with that finger. The bass notes B, A, G, E♭, and D in bars 18–21 should be slightly emphasized.
- In the D minor section reached at bar 27, make sure all the bass notes are held on for their full value and that on the second repeat the final three notes in bar 32 (F♯, G, A) are played as a crescendo to finalize at the top B in the second time repeat bar.
- When you reach the coda, try to hold all the notes in each chord for as long as possible to let the notes mingle with each other. These final 12 bars should be performed in a "dreamy" manner, ending on a final chord played as quiet as possible.
- The piece should be played in a slow, relaxed manner with a certain amount of rubato throughout.

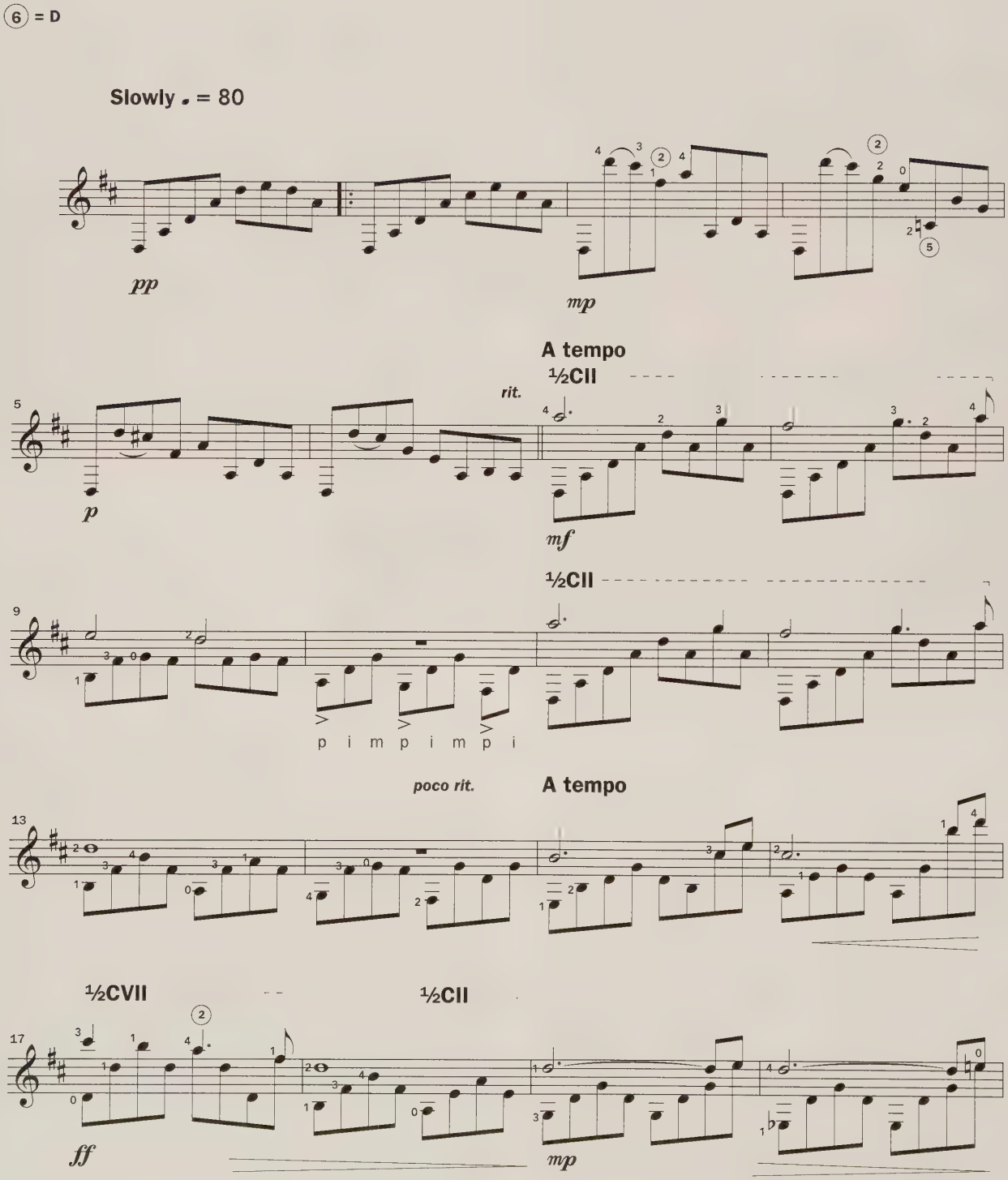
You can watch Irish guitarist Brian Farrell perform the song on YouTube: youtube.com/watch?v=JhGiHiyV9Fc. Farrell recorded the piece on the CD he put out last year devoted entirely to works by Marsh, called *By Lindisfarne*, which was reviewed in the Summer 2016 issue of *CG*. —*Blair Jackson*

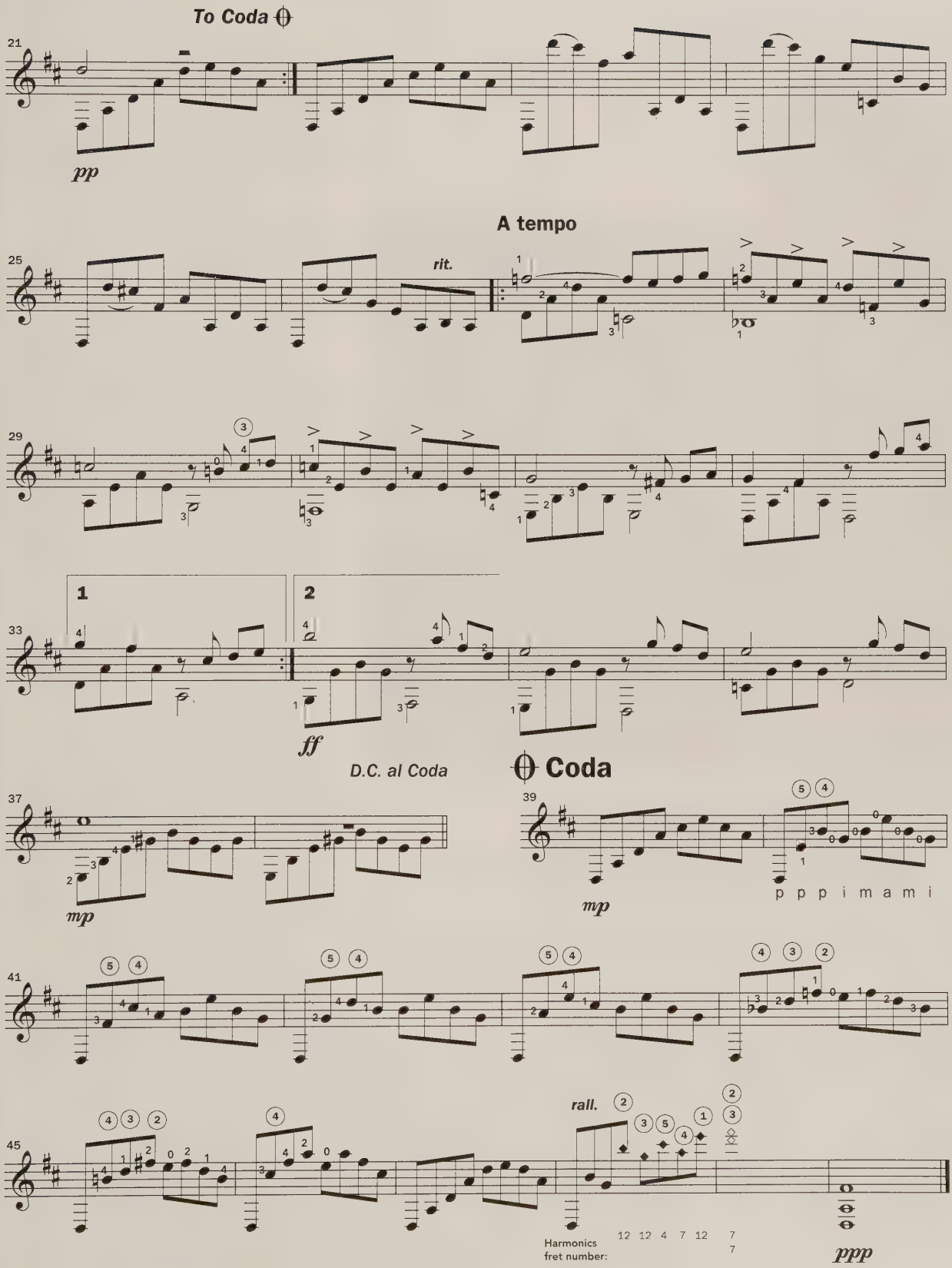
For more information about submitting pieces to "Music to Play," see the "Letter from the Editor," on page 8 of this issue.

(IN MEMORY OF HARRY CHAPIN)

CIRCLE'S END

Steve Marsh




To Coda
21
pp
A tempo
25
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29
1
2
33
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37
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Coda
39
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41
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Harmonics
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12 12 4 7 12 7
7
ppp

'RECUERDOS DE LA ALHAMBRA'

Breaking down the challenges of Tárrega's most famous piece

by Rhayn Jooste

Have you ever wanted to play Tárrega's evocative homage to Granada's Alhambra Palace? Did you find it a bit daunting after that first read-through? Well, hopefully we can help you come to grips with *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*. We will look at facilitating learning the chord shapes and shifts, along with adding some insight into the tremolo technique. Micro studies (see the Summer 2016 issue of *CG*) are utilized to help you get closer to performing this celebrated piece.

OVERVIEW

Francisco Tárrega's *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* is arguably the most iconic composition in the classical guitar's solo repertoire—it's a piece nearly every guitarist aspires to play. Alas, it can also be extremely frustrating to instigate, since plenty of practice is required before the aural illusion intrinsic to the music succeeds. Described by Emilio Pujol, in his biography of Tárrega, as a "piece whose strange enchantment only the guitar can express," *Recuerdos* was initially drafted in 1896 after Tárrega and his patron, Doña Concha Martínez, took a stroll through the Alhambra. Tárrega exploited the tremolo technique to capture the sound of the famous water fountains within the keep, thus ensuring the piece's renown and its challenging nature.

RIGHT HAND

It should be understood this is *not* going to be an article on tremolo technique, although as you will see below, there are two studies to help with nurturing this skill. Why? Well, there is already a wealth of information for preparing and maintaining tremolo out there. (One highly recommended source is Scott Tenant's *Pumping Nylon*. He offers detailed instructions to learning it and explains why he advocates sequential planting for the tremolo to really take off.) If tremolo is still fresh in your arsenal, take into account that the final objective for learning any new technique is to have it established in "muscle memory," which takes mindful repetition. With that in mind, let's dive in with some fundamentals.

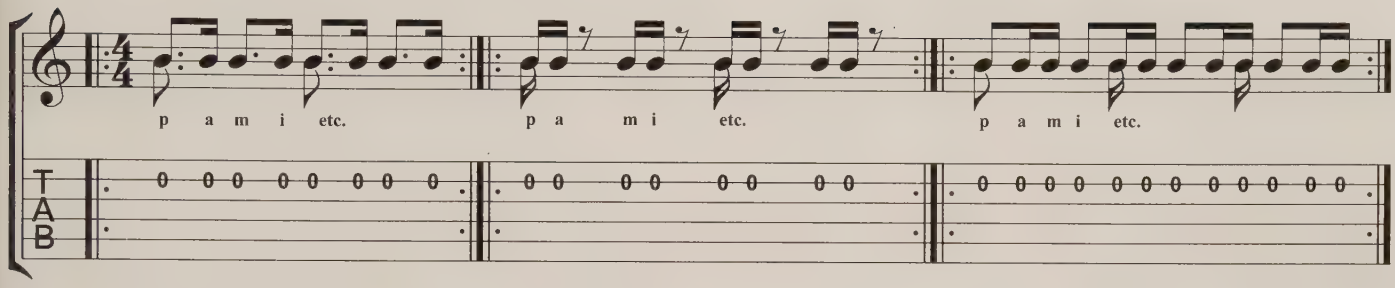
Tremolo should be practiced with sequential planting, at a slow tempo with a metronome. Aim for even tone, rhythm, and control. **Micro Study 1** is a great starter exercise and warm-up for tremolo, employing broken rhythms to spotlight each right-hand finger and its placement. These rhythms facilitate right hand independence and fine control. In all examples, the fingering should also be reversed to supplement hand development.

Micro Study 2 has an array of aims, so focus on securing each individual aim before moving on. The first deals with the fine motor control that is required from your right hand to bring out the inner melodies within Tárrega's piece, which he marks with an accent in the score. The ability to control the thumb volume as it plays each string in the study is essential; you should not hear the difference in the notes being played. The second item to work on is string crossing. The third part deals with speed bursts across strings. A final consideration for practicing *Recuerdos* is to play through the piece with a five-note and six-note tremolo pattern. (See supplement, p. 75). This will build up stamina and speed.

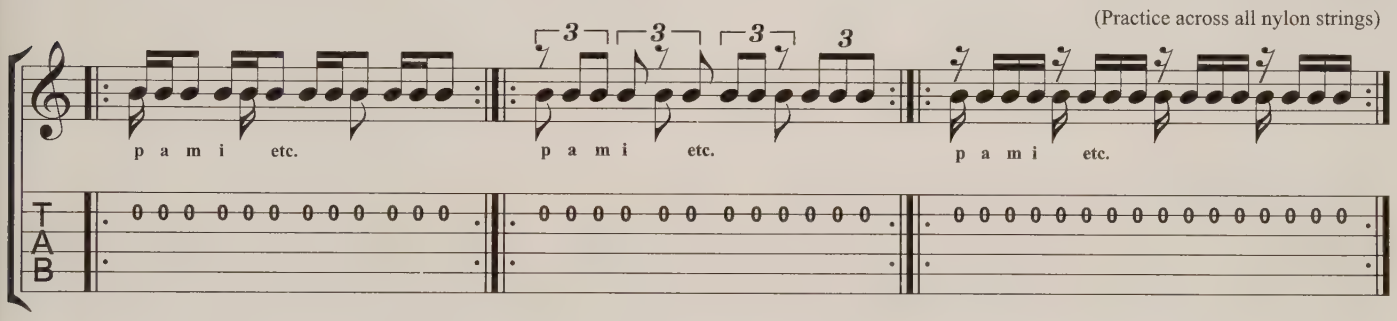
JIM GORDON PHOTO

Micro Study No. 1

Slowly with sequential planting: concentrate on even tone.

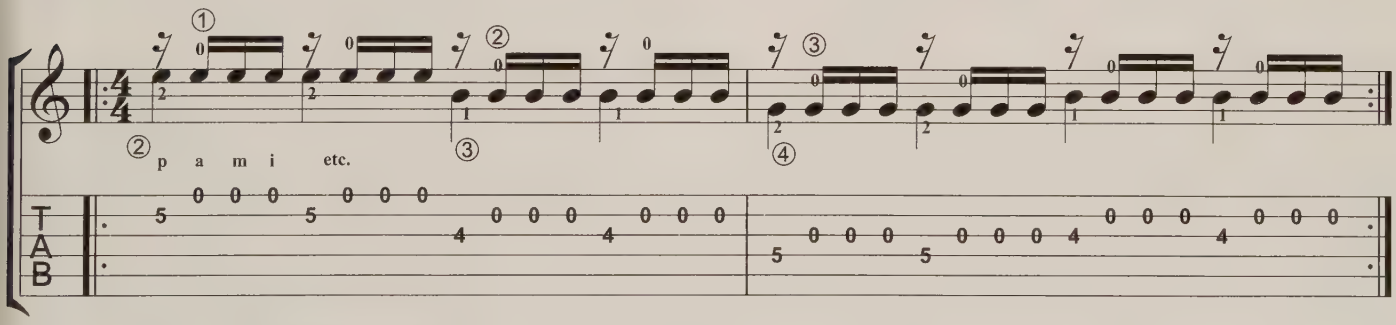


(Practice across all nylon strings)

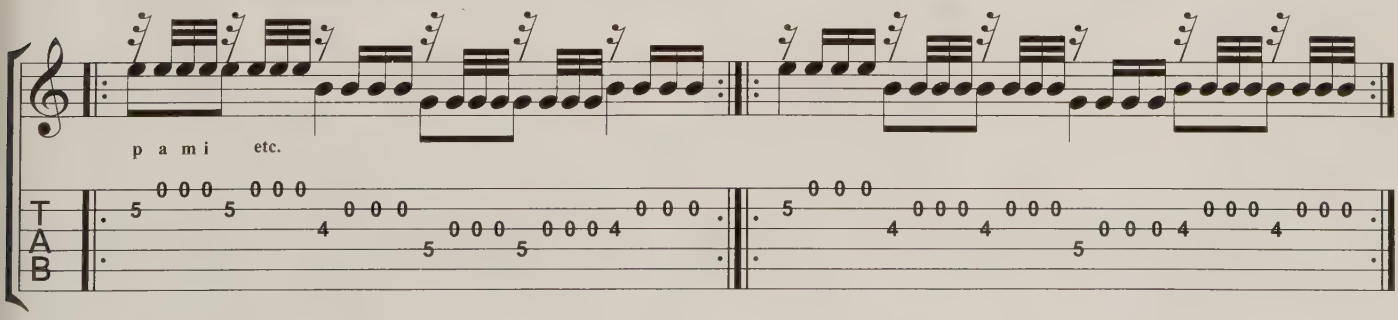


Micro Study No. 2

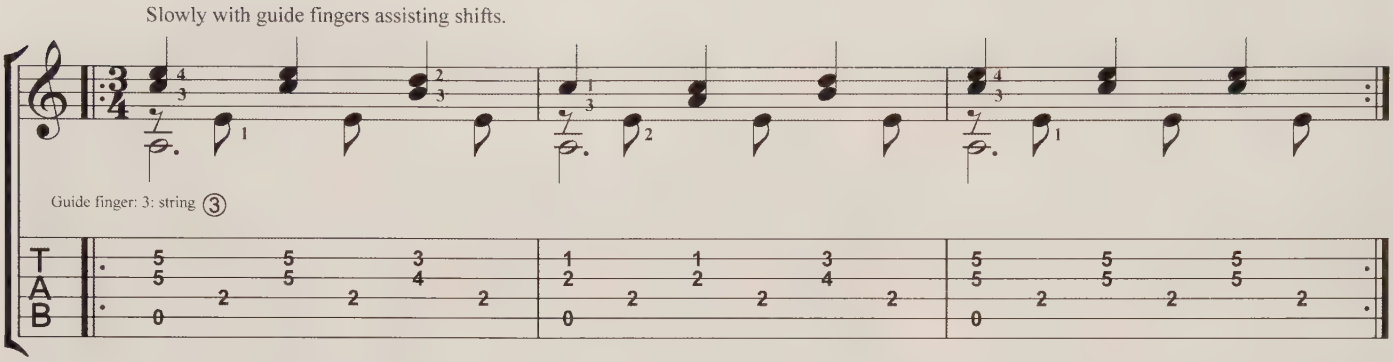
Maintain even tone & thumb control. No accents.



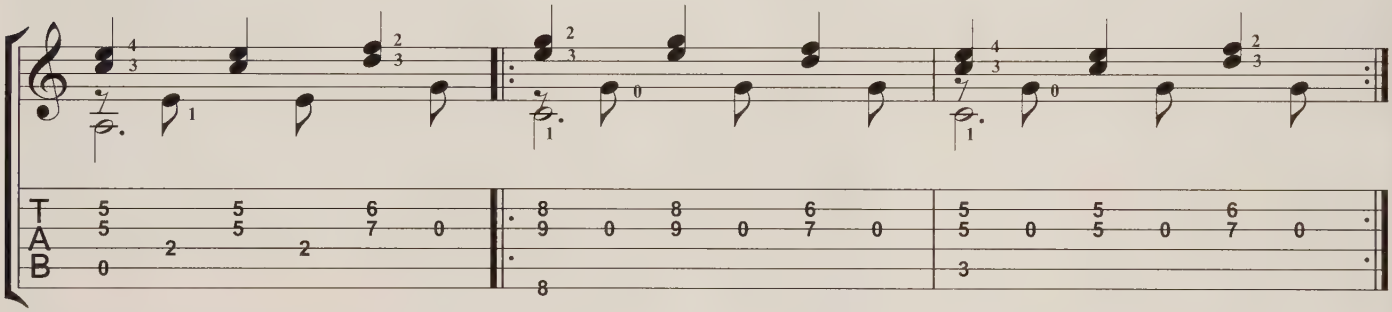
Speed bursts with string crossing: aim for even tone & relaxed execution.



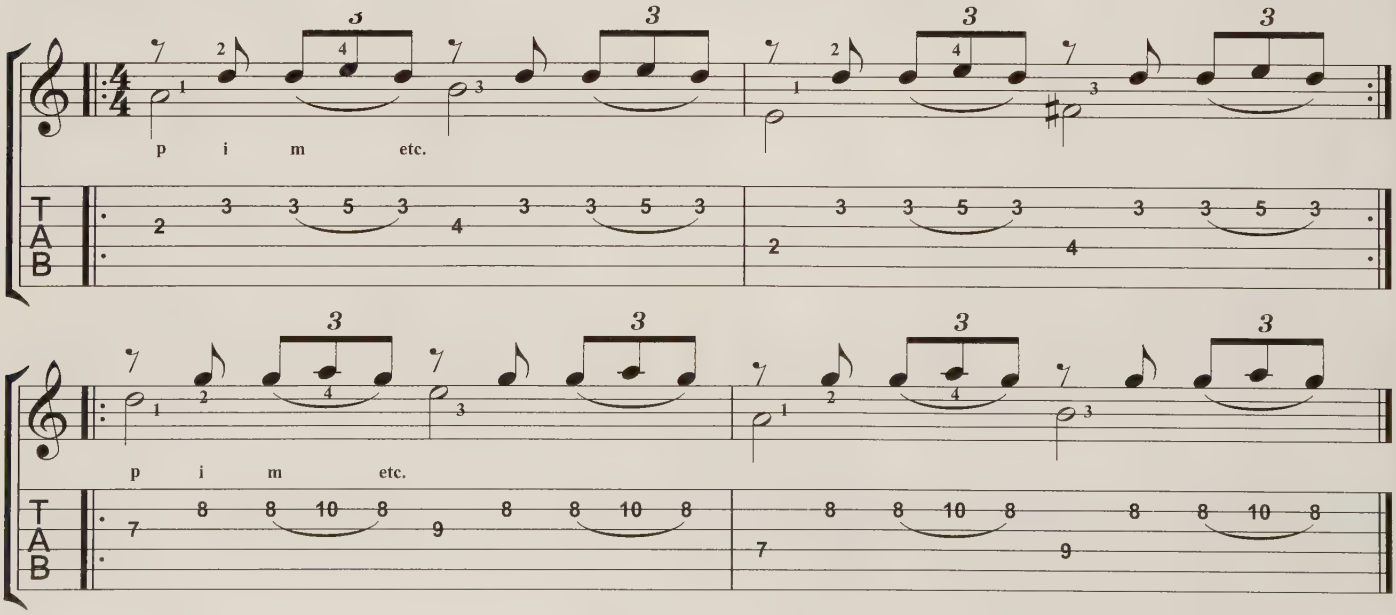
Micro Study No. 3



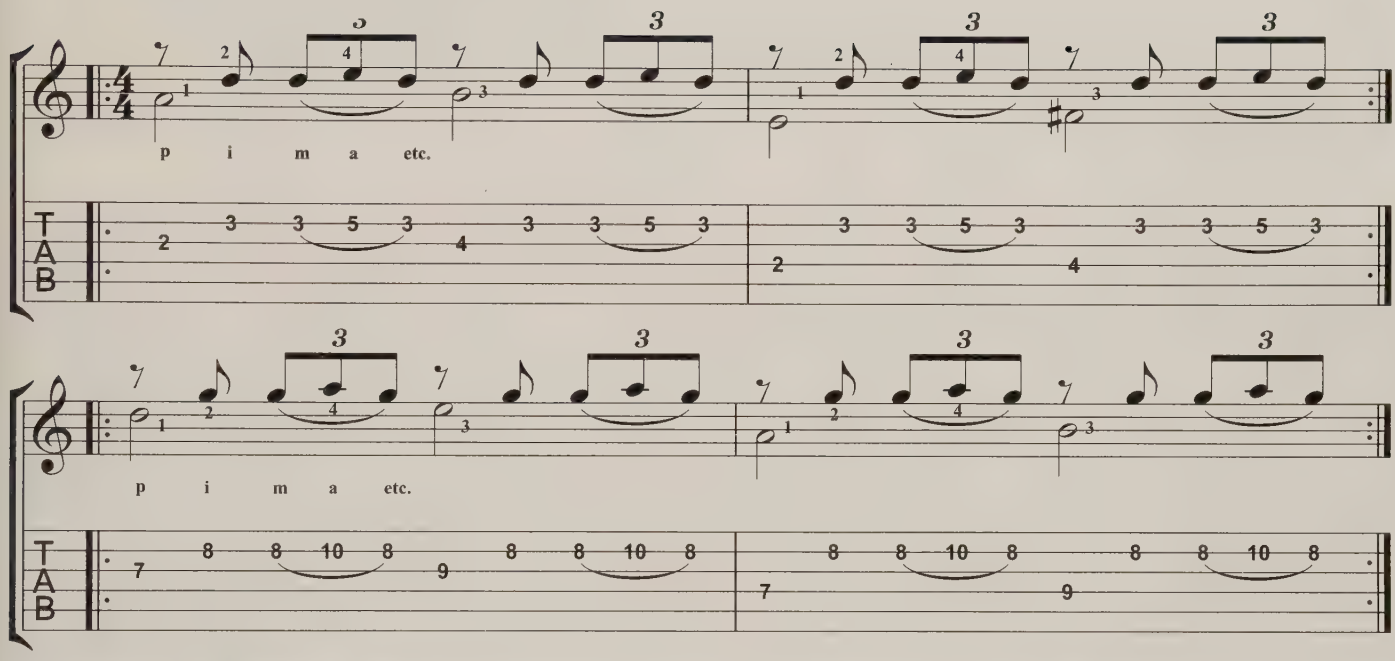
Micro Study No. 3a



Micro Study No. 4



Micro Study Supplement: Five- and six-note tremolo



LEFT HAND

Recuerdos de la Alhambra is in binary form (A B) with a coda. Tárrega employs A minor and its parallel major to great effect in each section. The best method of learning the chord progression is to break it up into segments and practice these individually—however *not* with the tremolo technique. Yes, that is correct: no tremolo! The first great secret to playing this piece, and any tremolo piece, is that your left hand's technical (and mental) demands need to be almost zero: like playing through the first piece you ever learned, super-easy.

When performing *Recuerdos*, your awareness should be on right hand control, maintaining an even tremolo, and, of course, musicianship. Only commensurable concentration should go towards the left hand or its technique. By practicing the chord shapes separately, focusing first on finger placement and then shifting, as **Micro Study 3** demonstrates, you gain left hand proficiency ahead of a performance. Note: this micro study illustrates grouping chord changes and is just a template for tackling the rest of the piece. Once you have the hang of the fingering and chords for that segment, move on to the next and then the next, until you have played through the entire piece as a simple waltz.

SHIFTING

When practicing the piece at a slow tempo, your shifting has to be fast—at-full-speed fast. In most cases, tremolo begins to work as an aural illusion around 120 BPM; this means your shift will be between two 32nd notes at that speed. When playing through the micro studies and *Recuerdos* at slow speeds, concentrate on shifting between chords at that higher tempo. Considering and exploiting guide fingers is essential to facilitate these shifts. Therefore, a good edition is indispensable for learning this piece.

SLURS

Micro Study 4 will help with shifting practice and those dreaded left-hand slurs in *Recuerdos*. The slurs will require some accuracy and strength from your little finger, so isolate these ideas and practice them slowly.

FINAL REFLECTION

Even though this piece is generally considered advanced, it is possible to get some enjoyment out of playing it even if you haven't reached that stage of development yet. The central tenet of this lesson concerns utilizing segmented practice to work on proficiency and technique. So regard playing this piece akin to running a marathon—try not to sprint in the beginning. Build up to a performance slowly and surely, a little bit each day. Saturated in the temperate tones of the Alhambra fountains, consider this concluding counsel from Tárrega: "The guitar's voice should be something in between what is human and what is divine."

To watch video demonstrations of each of the micro studies, go to classicalguitarmagazine.com/tag/method. You'll also find the micro studies for Rhayn's previous "Method" article on Villa-Lobos' Etude No. 1 *there.*

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PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID PACE

Images From the South
Amadeus Guitar Duo
Naxos

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

The Amadeus Guitar Duo covers much territory on latest release

by Chris Dumigan

This latest effort from the Amadeus Guitar Duo (Dale Kavanagh and Thomas Kirchhoff) features a beautifully varied and well-performed program from South America and southern Europe (hence the title). It begins with two by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco—the pleasing *Sonatina Canonica* and moving *Fuga*—both very difficult to play and here sounding effortless. Fernando Carulli's *Serenade in A Op. 96 No. 1* takes us back to the early 1800s—very precise and classical—in four movements, including a rousing "Finale." Alfonso Montes' *Surama* suite is next, with its five movements: "Danza," "Cha Cha," "Raudo," "Canto," and "Surena." Montes knows how to write entertaining and effective guitar music and this latest suite is wonderfully melodic and also full of character.

Gerald Garcia's *Lorca Fantasy*, based in part on musical themes originally collected by Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca, is a two-guitar distillation of Garcia's concerto for two guitars and orchestra—a lovely work that deserves to be played more. The "Prelude" from Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasilieras No. 4* is originally a piano work and the only piece here not written for guitar. It is a serious but emotive three minutes.

The Duo extracts three movements from Rodrigo's *Concierto Madrigal* to powerful effect—the "Fanfare," the very Spanish "Fandango," and the melancholy "Arietta"—which works surprisingly well as an excerpt. Jaime Zenamon's nine-minute *Casablanca* is new to me. Inspired by the famous 1940s film, it includes moments of effects that work very well atmospherically, and the use of "As Time Goes By"—prominent in the film—is particularly striking. Finally, Argentine guitarist Julio Sagreras' imaginative rewriting of Tárrega's *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* for two guitars closes what is a splendidly recorded and superbly played CD full of fine compositions. **CG**

Petrassi, Bach, Tansman, Weiss
Giacomo Susani
Stradivarius

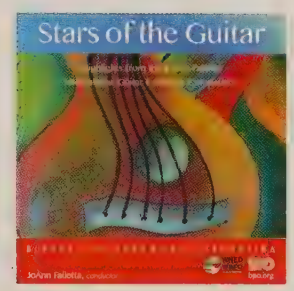
Young Italian guitarist shines on centuries-spanning program

Nunc by Goffredo Petrassi (1904–2003) is one of those late–20th century heavyweights that floats to the surface every decade or so. John Williams has performed it on a number of occasions and also featured it in a BBC broadcast from the distant past, although it seems the Williams recording many of us believed would follow has yet to materialize.

By placing *Nunc* in the company of Bach's ubiquitous *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro*, Alexandre Tansman's currently trending *Variations sur un thème de Scriabine*, and the Sylvius Leopold Weiss evergreen *Tombeau sur la mort de M. Comte de Logy*, Stefano Grondona protégé Giacomo Susani may well succeed in bringing the second of Petrassi's two known works for solo guitar to a mainstream classical audience.

It would take a more seasoned *Nunc*-spotter than I to evaluate Susani's interpretation in the light of what has gone before, but all the other items on the agenda are delivered with a patrician assurance that belies the performer's apparent youth. Few would have identified this as a debut recording had the program notes not announced it as such. Particularly memorable is the choice of closing item, in which Susani returns to Tansman with a suitably retro take on the gently persuasive Segovia classic *Cavatina*, complete with a triumphant "Danza Pomposa" as the customary add-on finale.

With stylish and mature playing throughout, this novel and inspired framing of the Petrassi might just have the capacity to tempt those who were reluctant to take the plunge. —*Paul Fowles*



Stars of the Guitar
Marcin Dylla, Chad Ibison, Ekachai Jearakul, et al., with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (conducted by JoAnn Falletta)
Beau Fleuve

Concerto competition yields superb live album

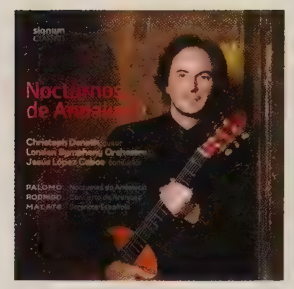
Spread across two CDs and totaling more than 140 minutes are highlights from the biennial JoAnn Falletta International Guitar Concerto Competition, with seven soloists recorded live, playing some of the most respected guitar concertos. So we find the great Marcin Dylla playing Manuel Ponce's *Concierto Del Sur* from 2004 in a riveting performance that really blows the cobwebs away in its final movement. From the 2014 competition, Chad Ibison plays Leo Brouwer's *Concierto No. 3 (Elegiaco)*, a wonderful piece in a performance every bit as good as other current versions around.

Ekachai Jearakul plays the Joaquín Rodrigo *Fantasia* (from 2012), and all the slightly awkward parts in Rodrigo's piece are here effortlessly and beautifully done, with the final "Canario" a hair-raisingly fast allegro. (Listen to those 16th-note runs!)

Disc 2 starts with a 2012 performance by Petrit Çeku playing the stalwart *Concierto de Aranjuez*, and a very fine performance it is, with all the tricky passages beautifully dispatched.

Roberto Sierra's *Folias* is a work new to me (it was written for Manuel Barrueco), and that has been my loss. Beautifully played by Celik Refik Kaya in 2012, it's a real find! Heitor Villa-Lobos' *Concerto* follows in a gripping performance by Marko Topchii from 2014, and finally, from 2008, Benjamin Beirs plays Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Concerto No. 1*, always a crowd-pleaser.

This is a wonderful set that (apart from the applause) never sounds live, so good is the recording, and the performances are simply exemplary! —*CD*



Nocturnos de Andalucia
Christoph Denoth (guitar) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jesús López Cobos
Signum Classics

Swiss guitarist makes strong case for Palomo concerto

Any guitar-and-orchestra release that includes Joaquín Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* but doesn't mention it in the main title is a welcome rarity. Instead, Swiss guitarist Christoph Denoth, in the exalted company of Jesús López Cobos and the LSO, gives top billing to the larger but relatively unknown *Nocturnos de Andalucia* by Lorenzo Palomo (b.1938). Composed at the behest of Pepe Romero and premiered by him in January 1996, the Palomo work is larger in every sense, its six movements having a combined duration in excess of 40 minutes and the orchestral personnel numbering more than twice that of the Rodrigo.

Although in no way a "difficult" work, the Palomo counters the Rodrigo's gentle lyricism with a more spiky and rhythm-driven soundscape in which the flamenco influence, while never entirely prevalent, is more keenly felt. Denoth's restrained handling of the solo parts in both the Palomo and the Rodrigo is engaging, and projects the often dense textures that lie within Palomo's guitar-writing with clarity and elegance. The challenge of balance between unequal forces never feels problematic, the guitar being silent during Palomo's most powerful orchestral passages and the number of active players kept within manageable limits when Denoth takes center stage.

Finally, Denoth's own valedictory guitar and orchestra setting of *Serenata Española* by Joaquín Malats (1872–1912) serves as a charming "encore" and is an inspired reworking of one of the most enduring solo guitar arrangements of the Tárrega era.

—*PF*

Recital
David Härenstam
Daphne Records

Strong and unpredictable "Recital" is all over the map

As the title implies, there is a wide range of music and styles on offer here, and the opening *Fuoco* by Roland Dyens shows the listener straightaway what a good a player Swedish guitarist David Härenstam is. After the *Folk Song Variations* of Atanas Ourkouzounov (another hefty slice of technical wizardry), comes a direct contrast in the *Romance del Pescador* from Manuel de Falla, wonderfully delivered and hauntingly beautiful.

Then it's back to the fireworks for Mauro Giuliani's *Grand Overture*, in which I detected a moment or two where the fast runs were not as clearly delivered as we might be used to elsewhere. Niccolò Paganini's *Romance* returns us to more reflective territory for a pleasant three minutes, and that gives way to Santiago de Murcia's *Suite en Ré Majeur*, in nine movements (all over in just over ten minutes), with some lovely ornamentation and spirited playing. Manuel Ponce's last completed work, the *Variations on a Theme of Cabezon*, brings the program back into the 20th century, and a fine performance of his musical last will and testament.

Three pieces from Agustín Barrios' vast oeuvre—*Preludio in Cm, Villancico de Navidad*, and *Oracion Por Todos*, all warm and friendly creations—lead us to Leo Brouwer's *Paisaje Cubano con Campanas*, an atmospheric work, and finally to two new pieces: *Lost Summers* from Staffan Storm, long and complex; and *Dreaming Dance* by Maria Lofberg, quiet and warm. —*CD*

Sentimientos Sudamericanos
Leandro Riva
leandroriva.com

Argentine guitarist sparkles on Latin-themed collection

In the days when *CG* printed full track listings, this would have been one of those discs where the titles took longer to type than the review. Fielding some 17 folk-driven miniatures, Argentine guitarist Leandro Riva, a protégé of US-born Bernard Hebb, not only provides us with the Spanish/Portuguese titles, but also reveals the dance on which each of them is based, be it a *malambo*, a *milonga*, or a *valsa brasileira*. Although most of the composers are recognized names in the field (Carlos Aguirre, Juan Falú, Paulo Bellinati etc.), the pieces selected represent less familiar ground. But fear not, for Riva's superbly presented offering is one of those resolutely upbeat releases whose objective is centered more on enjoyment than education. This said, many may emerge from the experience knowing much more about the traditions of Riva's home territory than they did at the outset.

Although no individual piece emerges as an instant hit, all manage to raise a smile. *Pichuqueando* by Juan Falú is the longest item on the agenda and still makes its exit after just under five minutes. Here and elsewhere, Riva successfully maintains that fine balance between the rhythmic and the lyrical that is central to this music. Medium to quick tempos are the order of the day, with the occasional burst of urgency invariably fleeting. Overall it's a charming and uplifting release from a guitarist whose affinity with the genre is in evidence throughout. —*PF*

The Song The Melody Carl Nielsen
Kaare Norge
Digidi

Quietly uplifting hymns from top Danish composer

Danish guitarist and composer Kaare Norge has put out nearly two dozen CDs since 1991, ably covering compositions from Scarlatti to Rodrigo to the Beatles (and everything in between). He's made entire Romantic, Christmas, and Spanish "theme" albums. But his latest is clearly one that is very close to his heart. Carl Nielsen (1865–1931) is arguably Denmark's most famous composer (as well as an acclaimed violinist and conductor), author of numerous symphonies, concertos, operas, cantatas, chamber works, and—relevant here—some 300 songs, most of them choral hymns (with lyrics by others) written for the church and usually accompanied by organ and piano; many are still sung in Danish churches today. For this project, Norge recorded his own solo guitar arrangements of 14 short songs (only one tops three minutes) that Nielsen wrote between 1903 and 1924, and all of them are gorgeous, clearly rooted in the long Protestant hymn tradition (going back to Bach), but also perhaps drawing on Danish folk sources.

I won't pretend to know what any of the songs are "about"—the titles are in Danish, with no translations offered. But the "content" is secondary; it's the *feeling* that these deceptively simple, highly melodic instrumentals communicate that is paramount. You'll find no guitar pyrotechnics here (though the playing is truly stellar throughout); rather the mood is largely sweet and serene, with only occasional forays into slightly darker contemplative spaces. This is spiritual music, quietly uplifting, truly soul-restoring, beautifully played and timeless. —*Blair Jackson*

Musical Banquet

Alan Rinehart
NovaScribe

Eclectic offerings from the Renaissance to Albéniz to a world premiere

Recorded in 2000, this newly released set by the American guitarist/teacher Alan Rinehart serves up a mixed meal of old and newer works. It opens with a set of pieces from Anthony Holborne, originally written for bandora (a lute-like instrument with several double-string courses) in the 1500s, and among the finest compositions from this era. Jumping ahead several centuries, *Mallorca* by Isaac Albéniz (1890) follows, originally for piano and set for guitar by Rinehart, and sounding very natural on guitar, as so many of his piano works do.

Next is a world premiere recording of John Duarte's *In Honorem Ioanni Doulandi Op. 97*, which consists of the theme from Dowland's *Melancholy Galliard* and seven variations, all set in a very dark, modern idiom that takes a little getting used to. Maximo Diego Pujol's *Five Preludes* is the work that introduced the composer to many of us, and time has not eroded the sharp, intense, and yet deeply musical sound world he conjures. A pair of pieces by Celso Machado—*Abraco e Neto a Lea* and *Parazula*—are very individual in their sound, with many different influences; not just the simple Latin touches that so many composers utilize. The last work on the CD is Don Ross' *First Ride*, set in a very unusual *scordatura* of F A C G C E; a fun and rhythmically infectious closer.

Throughout, the recording is clear and natural, the music varied, and Rinehart is clearly a skilled guitarist. —*CD*

Leo Brouwer: Music for Two Guitars

Brasil Guitar Duo
Naxos

First-class Brouwer by top-notch duo

Comprising Douglas Lora and João Luiz, the Brasil Guitar Duo is an established pairing that proves more than equal to the challenges of this significant addition to the Naxos catalog. Although Brouwer's works for solo guitar constitute a library in themselves, his output for two guitars is a relatively modest oeuvre that was for many years represented on stage and disc almost exclusively by the concise and amiable *Micro Piezas*. Also known but less frequently explored was the much meatier *Per suonare a due*. Both of these appear on this release in the company of the early *Tríptico*, the middle-period *Música Incidental Campesina*, and the more recent *Sonata de Los Viajeros*, a substantial yet accessible offering from 2009. According to a testimonial from Brouwer quoted alongside Graham Wade's notes, this program represents the composer's "complete works for two guitars," presumably meaning compositions only, not arrangements.

Both the music and the playing shine throughout. Even the ever-familiar *Micro Piezas* seem to have gained a new shot of humor and vitality. *Música Incidental Campesina*, which somehow manages to squeeze its four movements into the same number of minutes, serves as a quirky and contrasting prelude to *Per suonare a due* which, although representing Brouwer in one of his less sunny phases, has always been one of those resolutely uncompromising creations that reward those willing to give it the time and effort demanded.

This is world-class Brouwer from a duo whose endorsement by the man himself is richly deserved. —*PF*

Sephardic Journey

Cavatina Duo, with guests Avalon String Quartet, Desiree Ruhstrat (violin) and David Cunliffe (cello)
Cedille Records

Historic diaspora inspires poignant portraits of a people

This set from the married Cavatina Duo—guitarist Denis Azabagic and flautist Eugenia Moliner—features new pieces based on Sephardic folk melodies. Atlanta-born Alan Thomas' *Trio Sefardi* for cello, flute, and guitar is in three movements: The first is quite extensive, with many mood changes; the sultry second employs an alto flute; and the third is jig-like, and a fitting close to a piece that is a real find. Joseph V. Williams' *Isabel* is another melodic and rewarding piece—tragic throughout—based on a woman who was tortured for her faith during the Spanish Inquisition. (The Spanish persecution of Sephardic Jews was a reason they fled to other countries in Europe.)

Carlos Rafael Rivera's work *Plegaria y Canto* also includes violin. This is another substantial item (it's based on two songs), quite emotional and full of wonderful harmonies. David Leisner's *Love Dreams of the Exile* includes a string quartet and is in three movements, each using a different approach to variation. The last movement begins with nightmarish sounds from the quartet before turning tender and nostalgic. The final piece is another major work: Clarice Assad's three-movement *Sephardic Suite*, which also uses the quartet to represent many differing moods and harmonies.

This CD is full of melodic, rewarding works that have something to say and resonate in the memory. Recommended! —*CD*

Voces de Sefarad
Romina Basso (mezzo-soprano) and Alberto Mesirca (classical and Baroque guitars)
Brilliant Classics

Four centuries of Spanish and Sephardic songs

Although still an age at which he can be legitimately billed as "young," Italian guitarist Alberto Mesirca has an enviable track record of making discs with programs that range from the unfamiliar to the entirely new. Subtitled *Four Centuries of Spanish and Sephardic Songs*, this fascinating release offers 26 pieces presented in loosely chronological order, ranging from 16th century composer Alonso Mudarra to Joaquín Rodrigo. Interspersed with the vocal items are spontaneous instrumental interludes listed as *taksimler*, supplied by members of a six-piece team of Turkish musicians under the direction of Fahrettin Yarkin. The Turkish connection is that a number of the traditional Sephardic songs performed here emerged from Mesirca's research at the Beyazit State Library in Istanbul—a destination for Sephardic Jews fleeing from persecution in their Iberian homeland.

It all adds up to a richly exotic experience in which much new ground is explored before we finally reach familiar territory in the form of three Manuel de Falla songs, culminating in a suitably exuberant take on the famously flamenco-driven *Polo*. Elsewhere, Mesirca's expert handling of the Baroque guitar as an accompanying instrument proves to be a fine match for Romina Basso's powerful and passionate vocal lines, and the occasional addition of percussion from the Turkish ensemble further enhances an already intoxicating soundscape.

In an era when many new releases restrict themselves to the safe and secure, discs such as this shine like a beacon of inspired and original creativity. —*PF*

Fantasías
Rupert Boyd
Little Mystery

Wonderful program moves from the Renaissance to modern Hawaii

A youngish Australian guitarist living in New York, Rupert Boyd has, over the course of just three releases (including one by the Australian Guitar Duo—Boyd and Jacob Cordover), demonstrated that when it comes to picking pieces, he has very good taste, as well as consummate playing skills. Nothing ever feels like it's beyond his grasp, technically or emotionally. This new CD is a triumph of brilliant, assured playing on an incredible variety of pieces from the 17th through the 20th century.

There are four pieces here that are actually labeled as "fantasías" (which usually implies a certain open-ended construction), and each is completely different from the others in form, mood and era. The oldest is by Renaissance lutenist John Dowland (1563–1626)—a stately court dance that evolves into a peppier number that requires much dexterity from Boyd. Moving into the classical period, we find a marvelously varied fantasía by Luigi Legnani (1790–1877) that starts out solemnly, but soon moves into a brisk section of intricate scale runs, next offers a pair of song-like middle passages, and then moves to returns and variations on themes before a sparkling conclusion. Spanish composer/guitarist Julián Arcas (1832–1882) wrote the appealing "Fantasia on Verdi's La Traviata," using a variety of themes from that opera, arranged by Francisco Tárrega, who had been one of Arcas' students. The last is my favorite: "Fantasy on a Hawaiian Lullabye" by Byron Yasui (b.1940). It's a lovely, lilting slack key-style piece suffused with the golden glow of the Islands.

There's much more spread across the CD's nearly 72 minutes, including Boyd's take on David Russell's arrangements of "Four Traditional Celtic Songs," more modern-sounding fare from Leo Brouwer and fellow Aussie Phillip Houghton, and pieces by the currently ubiquitous Astor Piazzolla, Manuel de Falla, and Heitor Villa-Lobos. All are handled with just the right blend of thoughtfulness and crisp precision. And the recording by John Taylor is perfect. —*BJ*

Homage to Agustín Barrios
Virginia Luque
Iberia Productions

Familiar pieces mostly well-interpreted by Spanish guitarist

Billed as "Live from the National Opera Center" but without revealing the date it was recorded, this mainstream Barrios program consists mostly of pieces that were on a ground-breaking all-Barrios John Williams LP released in 1977. The playing is generally tidy and focused, but some tempos are on the slow side, with *Vals No.3* running for over five minutes and, most striking of all, *Mazurca Apassionata* nudging the nine-minute barrier.

It's not all about speed, of course, and those who prefer their Barrios served without undue haste will doubtless welcome this leisurely take on music that has previously been known to yield interpretations that border on hyperactivity. Elsewhere, there's a bright and measured tremolo in *Una limosna por el amor de Dios* and it has to be noted that *Julia Florida* in particular benefits from being allowed more space to flourish than is customary. The same is true of *Oración*, which, according to Richard Sliwa's definitive John Williams discography, is the only piece here that Williams has yet to present on vinyl or CD.

A secure and controlled performance of a familiar yet enduring Barrios set. —*PF*

Five Chinese Impressions
Johannes Möller
Doberman-Yppan, 10 pp.

SKETCHES OF CHINA

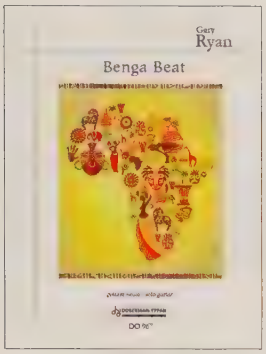
Johannes Möller proves to be a master of Asian idioms

by Chris Dumigan

Music that sounds convincingly Chinese is difficult for a European to write, but Möller has achieved it on these five short works. This truly is writing of the first order and is beautifully done and sounds utterly authentic. Each section has an ancient Chinese four-syllable saying or poem as its subtitle, but it is the compelling harmonic language that really makes these pieces work. There are lots of campanella passages with harmonic notes alternating with struck notes to create that Asian illusion.

The opening piece, "Moon and Flower Reflected in Water," is marked "freely," but gradually develops a speed until you are playing harmonic and struck 16th notes all over the fingerboard, along with a few note bends for special effect. The second piece, describing spring rain, is full of dancing pentatonic lines that take the player way up into the stratosphere of the fingerboard. The main thrust of the third piece, inspired by flower petals floating in air, includes rapid groups of notes in threes. This is the trickiest part to achieve successfully, although when done correctly it is very convincing. The fourth piece, about a blossoming desert flower, is in two voices and consists of an arpeggiated accompaniment and a melody line that moves between treble and bass. The final piece—"Grains at Harvest are a Farmer's Joy"—is more uptempo with a very upbeat feel and a resounding coda of strummed chords.

This wonderful set, which Möller wrote during his successful tour of China in 2015, is quite out of the ordinary and unusual, but fabulous to play—although it does take some doing to create the effortless "oriental" sound it so needs. It is definitely one to look out for if you're an advanced player. **CG**



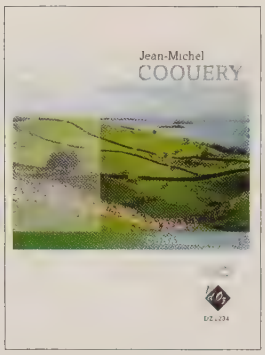
Benga Beat
Hot Club Francais

Gary Ryan
Les Productions d'Oz, 15 (*Benga*) and 10 pp.

UK guitarist touches on African and Hot Jazz styles

Gary Ryan always manages to write entertaining music, and this latest pairing is every bit as good as the others of his I have seen. The composer's intention with Benga Beat was to write a lively piece with an African flavor, and here he has been remarkably successful. It begins at a frenetic pace and doesn't let up for seven minutes, and is therefore quite a handful. But what really takes it into another category altogether is the manner in which Ryan introduces various percussive techniques into the piece—the opening features extensive passages with syncopated 16th notes, often played pizzicato, with numerous percussive hits interwoven throughout. Don't get me wrong, this piece is wonderful and very clever and effective, but only the best players will be able to cope with its requirements. There is an excellent performance of Ryan performing it on YouTube, so if you have any doubts about what I'm saying, check it out!

Hot Club Francais is very much in the Django Reinhardt Hot Jazz mold, with a fabulous melody and a bouncy set of harmonies, but again, the speed marking of 160 quarter notes surely takes this beyond all but the most talented players. So I would again refer you to Ryan's YouTube performance, for this isn't just a case of being slightly tricky; it is way beyond the talented amateurs among you, first-rate though both of these piece may be. —*CD*



Conamara (for Guitar Sextet)

Jean-Michel Coquery
Les Productions d'Oz, 8 pp. plus parts

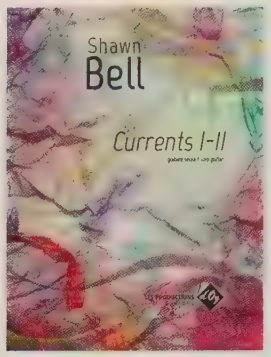
A limited and unadventurous ensemble piece

Set for six guitars, of which Guitar 6 is tuned down to D, the part scores for this piece fit on a single side, and the piece itself lasts a few seconds over two minutes. Set in the key of D, Guitar 5 (joined 16 bars later by Guitar 6) provides an arpeggio accompaniment that seldom moves away from D shapes and occasional G shapes, and these two parts would suit players of humble expertise—though the prevalence of fourth-fret notes on the bass strings might see a few buzzes if you're not fully concentrating.. Above this almost static harmony a gentle melody is woven, but I have to be honest—it's all a bit same-y: the motifs are short, and one two-bar motif emerges eight times. Moving it to another guitar but keeping it in the same octave isn't really adding variety, and it means that the piece is pretty much the same thing played twice but moved around between the players a bit.

As the thematic content is limited and the harmony unadventurous, it doesn't really present itself as an ideal piece for a concert. Neither does it have particular didactic worth, as there's nothing with any hidden teaching purpose here either, except perhaps in mastering some of the more awkward entries, which are often "off the beat" rather than on.

Still, this should suit an ensemble with players between Grade Two and Four.

—*Derek Hasted*



Currents 1 and 2

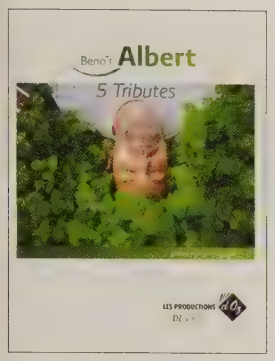
Shawn Bell
Les Productions d'Oz, 14 pp.

Dissonant and difficult, but also interesting

This Canadian composer has produced two diverse works here, with *Currents 1* being the shorter, at only two pages. In a mix of 6/8, 9/8, and 3/4, we find some undulating eighth notes in the middle of more sustained bass and treble lines, with the undulations being clashing seconds. It is very playable, but nothing is obvious, so it is initially difficult to get your fingers around.

The more extended *Currents 2* begins with over a page of complex natural harmonics interwoven among ordinary notes! After a section utilizing muted chords, a 3-against-2 idea in eighth notes emerges, followed by a more extended section of muted notes. Next, a slow and free section provides a certain contrast before a return to the opening ideas and a final burst of energy, as dissonant chords interwoven with slapped strings brings this lengthy work to a close. The music is on the far side of dissonance and hard to play, but if something a little different appeals to you, this may well be worth looking at. —*CD*

PRINT



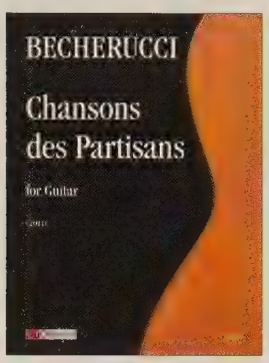
5 Tributes

Benoit Albert
Les Productions d'Oz. 11 pp.

Debussy, Metheny, Satie inspire homages

This is a nice set of contrasting homages, set in dropped D. So, the opening item is *Mr. Debussy Finally Went to Spain*, with some very Debussyan whole tones and other typical harmonic ideas. *The Day Mr. Bartok Lost His Scales*, after a deliberately dissonant opening, develops into an increasingly fast folk melody over a drone bass and some crunchy notes within, just to spice things up a bit. *How Mr. Metheny Met Mr. Kapsberger* consists of a chord sequence with some gently dissonant modulations, first written a la jazz guitarist Pat Metheny, followed by a variant in the manner of baroque lutenist Giovanni Kapsberger. *Mr. Prokofiev Lost His Glasses* has a walking bass idea that gradually gets more anxious and dissonant as our hero looks for his lost spectacles (?), only to "find" them towards the end, where musical normalcy is restored. The final *Waltz for Mr. Satie* really sounds like a piece Erik Satie never got around to writing, with its gentle, very French-sounding clashes in the manner of Satie's *Gymnopedies*, but set to a slow waltz.

This set is humorous and fun to play, and not terribly difficult, although a certain maturity is required to do them full justice. Definitely worth the effort, though! —CD



Chansons Des Partisans

Eugenio Becherucci
Ut Orpheus, 9 pp.

A lively set of Italian and French resistance songs

Here are three little pieces based on well-known "partisan" songs from the last century.

The opening Intro, *Piccola Marcia e Finale su 'Bella Ciao'* ("Bella Ciao" is a folk song from the 1920s adapted by the Italian anti-fascist resistance during WWII) has a cadenza-like introductory idea marked "freely" and based upon an undulating set of notes with harmonics. The main march section has repeated notes set against a theme that switches between bass and treble. As the piece progresses, the guitar-work gets busier, until another cadenza returns the piece to its opening ideas.

Fischia Il Vento ("The Wind Blows") begins with a slow chorale-like part in three voices, and a murmuring tremolando, before becoming another march section with a number of short but contrasting ideas. It then returns to the opening, and a coda of the melody in harmonics and a quiet close.

The final *Le Chant Des Partisans* is yet another march, with a percussive opening passage and harmonics, then the melody surrounded by repeated G's, moving above and below, before the harmonics return and the opening percussive idea ends the piece.

This is quite a nice set—difficult to play in a number of places, but not impossible for a good player. I could see this fitting neatly into a concert set as a modern piece that would not frighten away the public, as its harmonic structures are always melodic. —*CD*

The First Beat is the Last Sound

Book and CD by Gerard Cousins
Available separately from gerardcousins.com

Challenging works from a formidable guitarist

This high-quality pairing is identical in content, except that the CD also includes an arrangement of a piece by Eric Whitacre (*This Marriage*) that is not in the sheet music (but is available separately from Chester Music).

It is obvious from the start of the CD that Cousins is a formidable player, as the technical demands are considerable—time and again he presents hair–raisingly difficult arpeggio patterns over a long period, in constantly changing patterns, which are destined to stop many players in their tracks. A typical example is the opening *Assyrian Game*, written in an ever–shifting set of time signatures (18/16, 24/16, 30/16, 21/16, etc.), with the music constantly flowing up and down supporting a melody and changing its pattern every few seconds. The title track is another example of an allegro entirely of 16ths in a hypnotic array of patterns and harmonies. *Lisa Lan* is beautiful and different in style, but the other Welsh tune, *Suo Gan (Variations and Toccata on a Welsh Lullaby)* has an extended 16th note section with multiple time signature changes. Some other pieces are more open in style and make use of various free areas where the player can decide how long to play certain parts.

Both the CD and the book are wonderful creations, but nearly all the book is for the advanced player only. Yet the music on the CD sounds effortless, which clearly proves what an excellent musician Cousins is. —*CD*

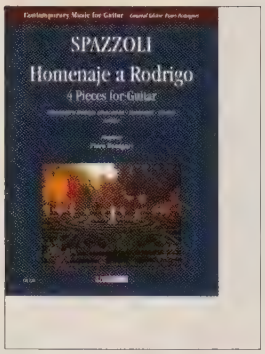
Choral Variations and Fugue

Dusan Bogdanovic
Dobermann-Yppan, 7 pp.

Another winner from prolific composer

This respected composer has produced many works over the last decades, but here keeps his harmonic vocabulary less astringent than usual, perhaps owing to its choral origins. A three-, and sometimes four-part choral melody opens up this piece, mostly in block chords, before the first variant has the melody entering from the bass end in three-part harmony, in 8th and 16th notes. Then the piece really begins to take off almost entirely in 16ths.

At this point, the fugue takes over, with the main theme entering solo in a slightly varied form before continuing mostly in three voices and leading to an ecstatic final burst for a triumphant finish. This is a lovely work, with tricky sections where the individual voices need careful handling, but is worth the effort and it deserves to be heard. —*CD*



Homenaje a Rodrigo; Arietta

Alesandro Spazzoli
Ut Orpheus; 10 pp

New tribute captures Rodrigo's essence

There have been many homages to the great Joaquín Rodrigo over the years, but this latest one, written for the visit of Rodrigo's daughter, Cecilia, to the 2015 International Guitar Convention in Alessandria, Italy, beautifully captures the guitaristic essence of Rodrigo's music.

Set in three movements, the opening "Evocation" manages to convey many of the familiar traits we often find in Rodrigo's guitar works—the minor-second clashes, the fast strums, the sudden sad melody lines, the fast triplet runs, and others—very effectively. The middle movement, "Homenaje," has a plaintive melody atop some telling chords and a number of sudden modulations to distant keys. Moments of dynamic contrast occur without warning, and there are even moments that utilize sweeping arpeggios like Rodrigo's own in the climax of the famous second movement of the *Concierto de Aranjuez*. The final "Gloria" is fast, joyful, and has many changes of time signature, just to add a bit more Rodrigo-styled spice. A charming miniature—the one-page *Arietta*—nicely finishes off this publication.

Both works are very successful and I can see them attracting many players, providing they have a decent command of the fingerboard and like Rodrigo's style. —*CD*

Seis Revelaciones

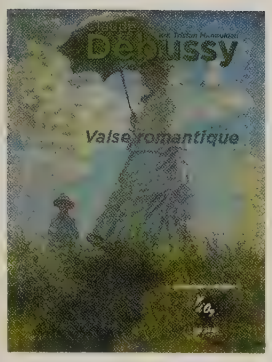
Maximo Diego Pujol
Lemoine Editions, 18 pp.

Evocative looks at the lives of Brazilian children

This fine composer has written a number of works that have been popularized by many players over the last decades. This latest set of six pieces covers a wide range of musical styles while still retaining that individual Pujol sound.

Un Nuevo Dia is a milonga meant to describe the arrival of dawn. Its melody is in the higher echelons of the lower strings, with accompanying arpeggios sitting above. *Tango Express* is very Piazzolla-esque, with its clashing minor seconds syncopated against a walking bass line. *La Busqueda (The Search)* is a beautifully evocative piece, with some lovely open-ended harmonies in its nearly constant flow of 8th notes. *Mulato* is another standout piece, full of catchy melodies and a riff that keeps recurring throughout, as well as a lovely middle section that roams through distant keys. *Cancion de la Tarde* is a romantic little piece with a pretty tune and warm, friendly harmonies—I can see this becoming an instant favorite with many players. The final work, *Aca a La Vuelta*, is the longest, the most upbeat, and a fittingly uproarious conclusion to what is a great set from this always reliable ambassador of the guitar.

This is altogether a fine set to invest in, suitable for intermediate players upwards, as nothing is too easy here. Highly recommended. —*CD*

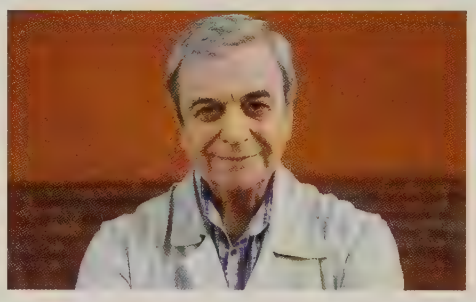


Claude Debussy:
Valse Romantique
Debussy / Richard Wagner
Deux Elegies
arr. for solo guitar by Tristan Mamoukian
Les Productions D'Oz , 8 pp. and 4 pp.

Uneven translations to guitar

Debussy's *Valse Romantique* was written for piano in his early period and published in 1890. So it is a piece full of great melodies and harmonies, but less typical of the mature sound of his later years. Many of his pieces have been arranged for two and more guitars, but arranging such piano works for one guitar is often asking too much. On paper, this arrangement looks masterful, with lots of interesting portions that really do work, but the whole, when strung together, is just impractical—it doesn't flow like the piano original, and too much is lost as a result of trying to cram it onto one guitar.

The two tiny elegies (the Debussy is 21 bars, the Wagner only 13) suffer the same fate. Time and again, the Debussy arrangement asks for notes to be held on that prove impossible, or just downright awkward. Similarly, the Wagner asks for a fifth string to be tuned to D♯ (a semitone lower than the sixth), and as it is nearly all chords throughout, it requires a lot of effort. Sorry, but here is unfortunately a case of the arrangements not actually working well to make the struggle worth it, and as a lover of Debussy's music in particular, I think that is a great pity. *—CD*



4 RECENT WORKS FROM PROLIFIC ITALIAN COMPOSING GIANT

Angelo Gilardino
Jerusalem Concerto (for mandolin, guitar, and chamber orchestra)
Au Pays Parfume: Five Inventions (for guitar and harpsichord)
Concerto Del Sepheitos (for two guitars and orchestra)
Concerto di Ventotene (for flute guitar and orchestra)
Berben

These four works by one of our most respected modern composers, Angelo Gilardino, were all written in 2013. The *Jerusalem Concerto* has an opening "Lento" on strings, leading to an "Allegro Impetuoso" from the soloists, with a leaping idea that is entirely theirs before other instruments enter and themes jump from player to player. After a varied repeat, an "Allegretto" emerges, the opening tempi returning to close. A short, pared-down "Adagietto" leads to a final "Vivo" in multiple time signatures. Two slower episodes swap with it before a final pianissimo coda.

The *Five Inventions* are "Andantino Grazioso," "Adagio quasi Grave," "Presto," "Andante quasi Adagio," and a final "Allegro." They are succinct and full of character and work very well on these two beautifully paired instruments (guitar and harpsichord), the repertoire for which is quite select. This makes a fine addition.

The two-guitar *Concerto del Sepheitos*, in five movements, opens with a dancing theme from the orchestra, with the guitars taking over at bar 38. A slower variation leads to a short "Andante," followed by the opening ideas, and then to a large cadenza and a swift pizzicato coda. The middle movement, "Adagio," is mostly in 5/4, with a faster middle idea in quintuplets, leading to a return of the opening and a complex coda. An arabesque-like "Allegretto," and an "Andante Molto Calmo, lead to a final "Allegro Capriccioso" beginning in 7/8 and going through various time changes and a quiet close.

The final concerto—for flute, guitar, and orchestra—is in three movements: A "Lento" introduction, followed by an "Andante Quieto," an "Adagio" in a mixture of 7/8 and 2/4, and concluding with a spirited "Allegro di Festa," in 10/8 with plenty of rhythmic interest. A fortissimo strummed sequence brings it to a fine conclusion.

As with all Gilardino's works, the harmonic language is advanced but still tonal, and often includes forays into complex rhythms. But every one of these works shows him at his very best. *—CD*

Yamandu Costa

BRAZILIAN GUITARIST THRILLS IN NYC CONCERT

by Cristina Schreil

Yamandu Costa
Kaufmann Concert Hall
92nd Street Y, NYC
April 9, 2016

Dressed in what looked like dark, formal pajamas, Brazilian guitarist Yamandu Costa drew energized applause from the crowd—before his concert even began. There seemed no better performer to wrap up the 15th season of the celebrated "Art of the Guitar" series at the 92nd Street Y on New York City's Upper East Side. The seven-stringed guitar virtuoso promised a diverse program on April 9. His set included several of his own compositions, Colombian composer Gentil Montaña's "Porro" from *Suite colombiana No. 2* and Sokolov's Polka, a traditional Ruska Romani work arranged by Sergei Orekhov.

Costa, known for marrying his mastery of technical skill—which often incorporates dizzying improvisation—with a breezy, soulful musicality, addressed an already packed Kaufmann Concert Hall in a pre-concert talk. In Brazil, improvisation is natural and fundamental to popular music, indicating a "total mastery of the instrument," he explained through a translator. He shared a glimpse of his process: Even when improvising in a very technical way, the music unfolds intuitively and unexpectedly. "You're seeking the notes that you hear in your heart," he said.

Costa first performed at the 92nd Street Y in 2009 as part of its annual daylong guitar marathon. He returned this year with two gleaming, gorgeous new guitars by Canadian luthier Will Hamm. As he spoke, he nooddled lightly with one of them—a foreshadowing, it turned out, to a seemingly spontaneous exploration later. Throughout the evening's program—which he reshuffled last minute—Costa offered a vitalizing, awe-inspiring concert. In its best moments, it offered a deeply engrossing glimpse of Costa's special union with his instrument.

Also in the pre-concert talk, Costa touched on his native continent as the springboard for his work. He was steeped in South America's folk music from a young age, before turning to the seven-stringed guitar. It's a main instrument of *choro*, an urban music genre rife with rapid rhythms, jazzy syncopation, and merry melodies. The very nature of his birthplace of Passo Fundo, Rio Grande do Sul (essentially a bor-

derland against Argentina and Uruguay), is reflected in his absorption of several musical idioms. Normally in Brazil, he explained, people aren't versed in the music of other regions. Even an embrace of African elements, which he said has a unique "total integration" in Brazil, varies from region to region. He stated his passion to unite all forms of South American music, and thus its peoples. It's "my mission," he said.

Even someone not familiar with myriad Brazilian styles could sense fusion at play. Stunning fast passages and folk rhythms united with tuneful and lyrical melodies. But for all the elements that meld in Costa's own compositions, the works felt wholly his. Delivering the energy of a rock concert, Costa often sang or whistled along. Sometimes, he'd slap his instrument with vigor. That low seventh string, tuned differently throughout the concert, offered a rich bass foundation.

The venue was a warm, balanced space for Costa to work his magic. His face played along; at one point he snapped from close-eyed satisfaction to a tickled astonishment, as if even he was surprised by the music. Costa's program also paved the way for a free-flowing connection with the audience. "My English is like a shit," he said, drawing laughs. His explanation ended up introducing a lovely new song written over last Christmas. Before performing a wonderfully snappy and jazzy rendition of "Porro," he seemed to offer lifestyle tips, remarking the work "goes well with a mojito." Particularly spirited and beautiful was "Sanará," inspired by an indigenous mythical flying horse. "A crazy horse," Costa clarified, "like a bad trip." He sang along, building the performance organically. Costa's body language, by now imbued with the same kind of comfort reserved for intimate jam sessions, was linked to the piece. He danced a bit in his seat. Mirroring dynamic contrasts and dramatic shifts in tempo, he'd pull up closer to the microphone or push on his feet to rock wildly back in his chair.

An unmistakable concert climax was the last work, "El Negro del Blanco," which bristled with a crisp, momentous energy. Fingers still flying, he was at his most captivating. He kicked up his right leg when the melody changed, or when he reached up to a bright high note. At the feverish end, as if his instrument was literally too hot to handle, Costa stood up, spun around and took a lap before exiting the stage—perhaps to grab that well-deserved mojito. **CG**

David Leisner

"Three Anniversaries"

David Leisner, Bradley Colten, Robert Belinic, et al
Gordon K. and Harriet Greenfield Recital Hall, Manhattan School of Music, NYC
April 3, 2016

Now in its eighth season, "Guitar Plus," is a concert series that showcases the guitar in chamber music. For this evening's concert, artistic director David Leisner put together an imaginative program based on three composer anniversaries: the 100th anniversary of Alberto Ginastera's birth, the 85th anniversary of Sofia Gubaidulina's birth, and the 80th anniversary of Richard Rodney Bennett's birth. The program consisted of Ginastera's *Sonata*, op. 47 for solo guitar, Gubaidulina's *Repentance* for cello, double bass and three guitars, and Bennett's *Concerto for Guitar and Chamber Ensemble*.

Argentine composer Ginastera's *Sonata* was the only piece on the program that referenced the Spanish tradition of the guitar, making use of idiomatic techniques such as tambour. Written at the request of Carlos Barbosa-Lima, the composition has four short movements: "Escordio," "Scherzo," "Canto," and "Finale."

I first heard Leisner play this piece 19 years ago at Weill Recital Hall in New York. In my review, I described his performance then as "controlled abandon." This evening, he somehow managed to play with both more control *and* more abandon. Leisner used the stately "Escordio" to set up the "Scherzo," where fast scale passages and dense chords found themselves in the company of numerous guitar effects. In lesser hands, the movement could sound gimmicky, but Leisner integrated all of the elements seamlessly. He played the contrasting "Canto" freely and expressively, as if he was creating it in the moment. Leisner's treatment of the "Finale," an energetic rondo, was a model of how to handle phrasing and dynamics in a rhythmically active movement.

Russian composer Gubaidulina's *Repentance* is the third reworking of her 2007 composition *Raveddimento*. Originally scored for cello and guitar quartet, she revised it later that year for double bass and three guitars, titled *Pentimento*. The version performed this evening was scored for cello, double bass, and three guitars. This was my first hearing of the piece. Although the music developed nicely, I came away feeling that the number of musical ideas was insufficient to sustain its length. At several points of repose, I found myself wishing that we had arrived at the end.

Cellist Jillian Bloom and double bassist Samuel Zagnit teamed up with guitarists Oren Fader, Daniel Lippel, and Bradley Colten for the performance. Each of the guitarists has extensive ensemble experience and as a result the guitars and strings played off of each other well—complimenting each other without intruding.

The guitarists deftly handled the interplay. My one criticism of the performance was that the entrances of the instruments were somewhat ragged at several points.

English composer Richard Rodney Bennett's *Concerto for Guitar and Chamber Ensemble* is more in the character of an 18th- rather than 19th-century concerto, in that the guitar is a participant in an ensemble, rather than a soloist. The three movements are "Lento e Rubato—Vivo," "Andante Lento," and "Con brio." This is one of the finest orchestrated guitar concertos, in part because the scoring with three winds, two brass, three strings, and percussion is relatively sparse. Nonetheless, the guitar required light amplification to be heard comfortably this evening.

The performance was an across-the-board success, in no small part due to David Starobin's conducting. It's often said that great musicians transcend their instruments, and that's certainly true of Starobin. Given his accomplishments as a performer, teacher, commissioner of new works, record label founder, and producer, it's no surprise to see him in the role of conductor. His intimate knowledge of 12-tone music made him an ideal choice to bring this performance to life.

Although I'm familiar with the *Concerto* from Julian Bream's recording, hearing it performed live for the first time was a treat. I hope that other ensembles will be inspired to play this work; which is musically very satisfying. In particular, hearing it live brought home how imaginative Bennett's writing for percussion is. Along with the rest of the ensemble, guitarist Robert Belinic brought out the different colors and moods of the *Concerto*. My only complaint was visual, in that his large music stand obscured most of his guitar.

With so many pieces in the traditional guitar repertoire, and so many new works written each year, it can be a challenge to put together an entertaining program that also has depth and an overall point of view. In all of those ways, *Three Anniversaries* succeeded admirably.

(Full disclosure: I interviewed David Leisner and David Starobin for my book *Classical Guitarists: Conversations*.)

—*Jim Tosone*

Vicente Amigo

Vicente Amigo

Flamenco Festival
Sadler's Wells, London
April 21, 2016

The annual Flamenco Festival at Sadler's Wells, the traditional theater for dance in London, has offered the best and latest flamenco from Spain in London since 2003. There are guitarists in all the flamenco performances, and many *very* good ones, but for me, the most inspiring guitarist at this year's fest—which, as always, offered many evenings of stirring music, song, and dance from a wide variety of amazing performers, from April 16–28—was Vicente Amigo.

Even before the unexpected death of Paco de Lucía two years ago, it was quite normal to evaluate guitarists in relation to him. Other guitarists were always respectful of all that Paco accomplished and acknowledged him as "the best"; they then tried to follow his path, but in their own way. In Vicente Amigo's concert, this presence of the spirit of Paco de Lucía could immediately be seen in Amigo's choice of clothes—wearing a white shirt with a black vest, as Paco always did on stage.

Amigo started the evening with a solo guitar piece, an improvisation in a free style. There is a particular atmosphere Amigo creates with his masterful playing—a feeling of calm, but also imminent expectation. He plays fast phrases at incredibly virtuosic speeds and the notes are all clear and, remarkably, all seem to have meaning. He is completely absorbed in the music—as we are listening to him. Every-

thing I hope for when I see him play was there: Inventive musical ideas, virtuosic playing, a beautiful sound, and a feeling of joy and sharing.

Amigo has a modern style, using harmony borrowed from jazz, as so many flamenco musicians have done since Paco introduced it to the genre. But there is something that makes Amigo stand out from all other flamenco guitarists. Because of his broad musical knowledge, when he uses jazz-style harmonies, they are used in a deeper way. He also has a very refined tonal quality, which he changes according to the harmony he is using and takes his expressive abilities beyond what I hear in any other flamenco players.

Using the full range of dynamics with the amplification, his *fortissimos* sometimes build to an almost frightening volume, but these are momentary and the loudness always feels appropriate—a point of climax in the music, which soon relaxes; his playing is full of intriguing contrasts.

Most of the pieces on the program came from his most recent recording, *Tierra*, where he collaborated with Celtic musicians and the British multi-instrumentalist and producer Guy Fletcher (who worked for many years with Mark Knopfler and the band Dire Straits), but wrote all the music himself. At Sadler's Wells, Amigo performed mostly with flamenco musicians: Anil Fernández on second guitar, Paquito González on percussion, Ewen Vernal on five-string electric bass, flamenco singer Rafael de Utrera, and the flamenco dancer Antonio Molina "El Choro." As an ensemble they were united in their spirit, and though the central focus was always on Amigo, he was clearly inspired by them, and they by him. Although the pieces such as *Estación Primavera*, *Bolero a los Padres*, *Campos de San Gregorio* and *Rio de Seda* were all very familiar, there was great pleasure in hearing these performed in concert because Amigo has a great musical imagination and he puts different ideas into them each time he performs them.

The whole performance was spiritually uplifting and the audience gave him a standing ovation and called out for more.

—Thérèse Wassily Saba

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SETTING THE PACE

An American luthier raises the bar on the modern concert guitar

by Adam Perlmutter

There are guitars that are good, and then there are those that are revelations. Falling into the latter category is a freshly made custom model by David J. Pace, the Baltimore, Maryland–based luthier known for his rich-sounding and highly playable contemporary instruments. Just a few open chords and runs on the guitar reveals it to have an extremely rich voice, with a three-dimensional quality that makes it feel almost symphonic—and makes it very inspiring.

A PERFECT BLEND OF INNOVATION AND TRADITION

Pace was in his late teens when he found himself out of reach of a suitable guitar and decided that he needed to build his own. But he set aside that plan in favor of embarking on a career as an audio engineer, and it wasn't until some years later, after he returned from a life-changing trip to Spain during which he spent a day with the luthier Amalio Burguet, that he realized this goal. In 2002, Pace finished his first guitar, working at that time in a small apartment.

At first, Pace, who was mentored by the luthier Ross Gutmeier, made variations on the designs pioneered by Torres, and then by Ignacio Fleta and Robert Bouchet. By 2010 Pace had arrived at his own standard model, with its thoughtful modern details, such as a composite double-top soundboard and carbon-fiber–reinforced neck. In his work, one senses a perfect balance of innovation and tradition.

Our review model boasts structural aspects not apparent to the eye: A Western red cedar composite double-top soundboard, which is made from two separate layers of wood, sandwiching a thin layer of Nomex (a paper-like material processed into honeycomb-textured sheets, originally for aviation and aerospace purposes). This design, which was pioneered by the luthiers Gernot Wagner and Matthias Dammann, is intended to enhance a guitar's volume and projection. Our Pace has both in spades.

The Spanish cedar neck is reinforced with carbon fiber; the box's linings are solid strips of hardwood, rather than the traditional kerfed linings and the lower bout is stiffened with buttresses. The linings and buttresses add stability to the instrument, helping it withstand the stresses brought on by seasonal changes of humidity and by string tension.

A SONIC WONDER

Our Pace is lightweight—just three pounds, 12 ounces—and well balanced between the neck and the body, making it very comfortable to cradle. Adding further comfort is the solid hardwood armrest that supports the forearm and keeps it from damping the top's vibrations.

The neck feels uncommonly playable. Its slight, 30-inch fretboard radius is a subtle deviation from the traditional flat fretboard, and makes playing barre chords a breeze, while also making it easier for the right hand to navigate the strings—much in the same way that the crescent-shaped plane of a violin's stings helps support bowing. Further, the back of our review model's neck features an optional matte oil-varnish finish that reduces friction, making the neck feel fast and easy.

Our Pace arrived having been strung up for the first time just days before it

JOEY LUSTERMAN PHOTOS

AT A GLANCE

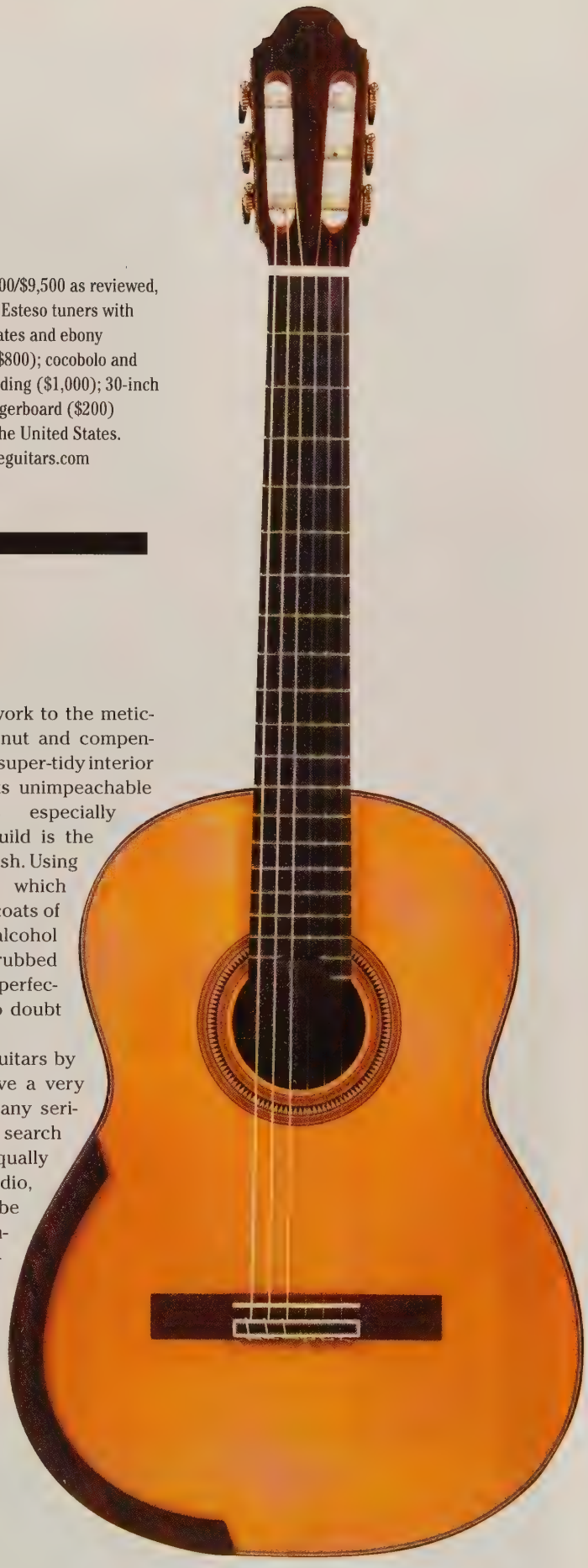
DAVID J. PACE CUSTOM MODEL

BODY
Western red cedar composite double-top soundboard; ribbon-figured cocobolo back and sides; traditional French polish finish

NECK
Spanish cedar with carbon-fiber reinforcement; ebony fretboard; 650mm scale length; 52mm nut

EXTRAS
Hannabach 815 Silver Special strings; TKL hard-shell case (BAM Hightech case optional)

PRICE
from $7,500/$9,500 as reviewed, with Graf Esteso tuners with bronze plates and ebony buttons ($800); cocobolo and ebony binding ($1,000); 30-inch radius fingerboard ($200)
Made in the United States.
davidjpaceguitars.com



shipped. It sounded terrific right out of the box, but it really seemed to open up during the few weeks I spent playing it. The guitar has a formidable presence and a deep sonic palette. It's very touch-sensitive and capable of delivering everything from the most dulcet to aggressive tones. And it has a remarkable evenness between its registers—the bass notes are so full and deep, the mids rich and complex, and the trebles clear and singing—a balanced voice that lends itself to any type of repertoire, from early music to the most contemporary fare.

LUXURIOUSLY DESIGNED AND BUILT

The Pace is a handsome instrument. Its centerpiece is Pace's handmade rosette, with a tile motif that complements the colors of all the woods used in the guitar. For the back and sides (as well as the headstock and heel caps), Pace selected cocobolo, a Central American hardwood known for its sparkling tone and responsiveness; this set, having a rare ribbon figuring and deep reddish-brown coloring, is particularly beautiful.

And then there are the tuners, made by Jorg Graf, an engineer and artisan in Ontario, Canada. Our review model sports Graf's Esteso set, with intricate floral motifs gracefully engraved into brass plates, and ebony tuner buttons. A work of art in itself, the tuner set adds a subtle touch of luxury to the guitar.

From its tip-top fretwork to the meticulously scalloped bone nut and compensated saddle to the box's super-tidy interior aspects, our Pace boasts unimpeachable craftsmanship. What's especially impressive about the build is the guitar's French polish finish. Using a time-honored practice which involves applying many coats of a mixture of shellac and alcohol to the wood, Pace has rubbed the finish to sumptuous perfection, and its thinness no doubt adds to the sound.

Priced from $7,500, guitars by David J. Pace might have a very selective audience. But any serious classical guitarist in search of an instrument equally suited to the stage, studio, or home—one that will be a hearty lifetime companion—should most definitely consider contacting Pace, clearly one of the great American luthiers.

Adam Perlmutter transcribes, arranges, and engraves music for numerous publications. See his website at adamperlmutter.com.

AUGUST 20–26
West Dean International Classical Guitar and Summer School
West Dean, West Sussex, England
25th anniversary celebration at West Dean College, with concerts, technique classes, lectures, master classes, workshops, and lessons. Tutors/performers include festival director Andrew Gough, Benjamin Verdery, Berta Rojas, Kai Nieminen, Manus Noble, Raymond Burley, Sean Shibe, the Aquarelle Guitar Quartet, and Rebecca Baulch.
westdean.org.uk

Andrew Gough, director of the West Dean festival

Marcin Dylla will be at the Forum Gitarre Wien

AUGUST 22–28
Forum Gitarre Wien
Vienna, Austria
Courses, concerts, lectures, competitions, luthier exhibitions. Concerts at historic Grosser Ehrbar Saal. Artists/teachers include Marcin Dylla, Gérard Abiton, Alvaro Pierri, Nadja Jankovic, Kostas Amaxopoulos, Johann Jacob Niessen, more.
forum-gitarre.at

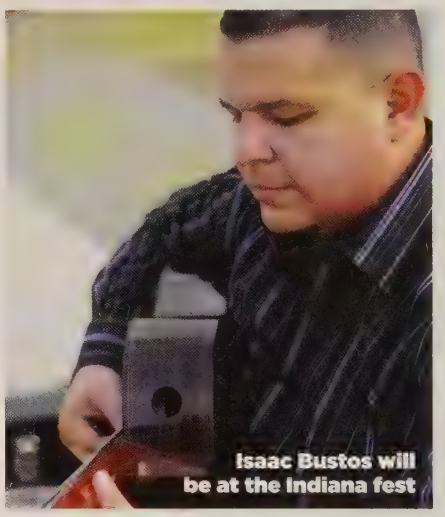
SEPTEMBER 15–18
University of Louisville Guitar Festival and Competition
Louisville, Kentucky
Solo Artist and Youth competitions, workshops, master classes, concert series. Artists/clinicians include Thibaut Garcia, Stephen Lochbaum, Kevin Manderville, Marek Nosal, Emma Rush, and Tantalus Quartet.
louisville.edu/music/guitarfest

SEPTEMBER 22–25
International Classical Guitar Competition 'Ruggero Chiesa'
Camogli, Italy
The 8th biennial competition in a beautiful seaside town adjoining Genoa, this honors the memory of a leading exponent of Italian classical guitar (and founder of *Il Fronimo* magazine), Ruggero Chiesa (1933–1993). Competition open to all players born after 1984. International panel of judges to be announced.
gpmusica.info/pagine/ruggerochiesa.html

OCTOBER 5–17
Festival della Guitarra de Sevilla
Seville, Spain
International competition (registration until Sept. 30), plus First International Flamenco Guitar Contest "Paco de Lucia in Memoriam;" lectures, master classes, concerts. Artists include Zoran Dukic, Francisco Bernier, Anton Baranov, Judicael Perroy, many more.
guitartfestivalsevilla.com

Anton Baranov plays Sevilla

OCTOBER 15–22
Silesian Guitar Autumn
Tychy, Poland
International festival includes guitar recitals and concertos with artists such as Richard Galliano and Sylvain Luc, Marcin Dylla, Gruber & Maklar Duo, Amadeus Guitar Duo, Andrea De Vitis, Kupinski Guitar Duo, and more; also, three-level competition for young guitarists, master classes, lectures, and exhibitions.
guitar.tychy.pl


Isaac Bustos will be at the Indiana fest

OCTOBER 22–23
Indiana International Guitar Festival and Competition
Bloomington, Indiana
The 7th annual competition at the prestigious Jacobs School of Music at the University of Indiana. Two full days of competition in Open and Youth divisions, plus guest recitals with Rovshan Mamedkuliev (Russia) and Isaac Bustos (Nicaragua/US).
music.indiana.edu/departments/academic/guitar/events.shtml

OCTOBER 27–29
Le Concours International de Guitarre Classique 'Robert J. Vidal'
Barbezieux-Saint Hilaire, France
A biennial competition with roots dating back to the late 1950s and its namesake, a leading French proponent of classical guitar, held in a picturesque village in southwestern France, north of Bordeaux. Players from many countries compete for a top prize of €10,000. Registration deadline is September 15.
concours-robert-j-vidal.com

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WHEN I TEACH, I TRY TO LEAVE A STUDENT WITH NO GRAY OR SHADY AREAS.

If I suggest something, I say: "Just give it a shot. It might not work with your personality or your approach; you can have it as an alternative. I don't mind if you don't like it, but don't erase an idea before you are able to do the best you can with it." When you are trying to do justice to music, there shouldn't be egos involved and students shouldn't get offended.

—ANITGONI GONI
From an interview
with Thérèse Wassily Saba
Classical Guitar February 2002

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